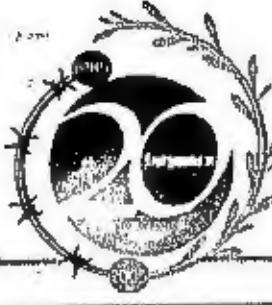


**ENTERTAINMENT / A2-I**

'Badjao,' 1957 Southeast Asia Filmfest winner, makes cable debut

SPORTS / A17

Woods wins Buick Open for 4th time

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

Do you have a story to tell about Edsa I? The Inquirer is looking for those untold stories (photos, too) that contributed, no matter how small, to the first People Power in 1986 that so stunned the world and inspired and emboldened people in chains everywhere to break free. The contributions that will be selected by the editors will be used for the Inquirer's special celebration of the 20th anniversary of Edsa I. Send your contribution, with your address and contact number, not later than Feb. 15 to fdelmundo@inquirer.com.ph

Joker sees something sinister in PCGG silence

By Philip C. Tuba

"THERE IS SOMETHING SINISTER IN THIS." This was what Sen. Joker Arroyo said yesterday after Presidential Commission on Good Government Chair Carmilo Sabilo chose to have the proposed PCGG budget slashed to zero rather than answer questions on whether President Macapagal-Arroyo authorized negotiations to set-

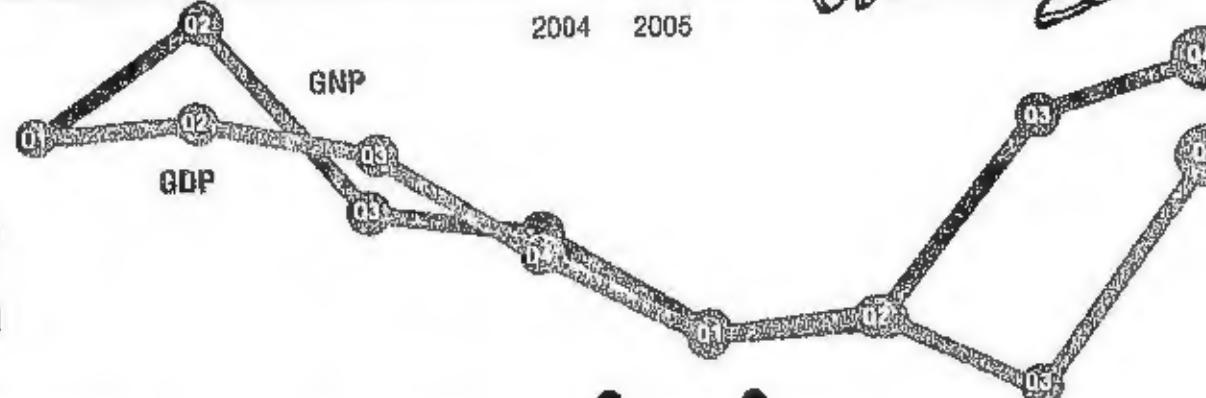
JOKER / A6

Tuesday, January 31, 2006

★★ 4 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 54 P18

website: www.inq7.net**GDP & GNP GROWTH RATES**

1ST TO 4TH QUARTERS, 2004-2005



RP growth slower but surprising

Economy expands 5.1 percent

By Michelle V. Ramos

HIGH OIL PRICES, sluggish exports and weak agricultural output capped Philippine economic growth at 5.1 percent in 2005 from 6 percent the previous year, officials announced yesterday.

Even so, most market analysts were pleasantly surprised the economy surpassed their average forecast of a full-year growth of only 4.8 percent—thanks to an estimated \$10.85 billion in remittances from overseas Filipino workers that spurred consumer spending.

The Philippines' gross domestic product (GDP), the value of goods and services produced within the country, last year rose 5.1 percent to P5.379 trillion. The gross national product (GNP), which includes remittances of OFWs and other income from abroad, slowed to 5.7 percent from 6.2 percent in 2004.

The agriculture sector, which employs nearly four in 10 Filipinos, "moderately expanded" by 2 percent compared to 4.9 percent in 2004 due to the El Niño dry spell that tempered the growth of crops, livestock and poultry, Economic Planning Secretary Augusto Santos told a news conference.

The key services sector also eased to 6.3 percent from 7.1 percent, according to the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB).

But the industrial sector expanded by 5.3 percent from 5.2 percent.

RP GROWTH / A6



PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo trots the line during the 15th anniversary celebration of the Philippine National Police in Camp Crame. Like she did earlier with the Armed Forces, she promised P1 billion in benefits to PNP personnel.

POPO-MALACAÑANG PHOTO

GMA presents P1B in benefits to cops

By Christine O. Avendaño and Luige A. del Puerto

PROFOUNDLY THANKING THEM for their support amid new coup threats, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday announced a P1-billion package of benefits for the national police.

"I needed you. I still need you, because the seas were often rough and the wind was in our face. But because of you, the police, were always there for me," the President said.

In a surprise visit to Camp Aguinaldo last week, the general headquarters of the Armed Forces

of the Philippines, Ms Arroyo announced that she was authorizing the release of P1.5 billion for housing projects for soldiers.

At the 15th anniversary celebration of the Philippine National Police, she announced that the police would also benefit from housing and scholarship pro-

grams her administration would implement.

"We want to tell each and every member of this police force, you are not forgotten," the President said.

Aside from inaugurating a residential condominium for the PNP,

GMA PRESENTS / A6

MINE FIRMS / A4

Abalos, other Comelec execs reject quit call anew

By Jerome Aning

COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS Chair Benjamin Abalos made it clear yesterday he and his fellow Comelec commissioners intended to hang on to their jobs despite a call from the country's

bishops for them to consider resigning.

"I answered that (issue) a long time ago," Abalos said, referring to his rejection last month of a call by the Senate for him and other Comelec commissioners to resign over the allegedly fraudu-

lent purchase of automated vote counting machines worth P1.3 billion.

Abalos, in a phone interview, said he shared the hope of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) that the Comelec would be transformed

into a poll body "beyond reprobation."

"Yes, there should be a continuous investigation," Abalos said.

Aside from the Megapacific scandal involving the counting machines, the reputation of the Comelec has been damaged by

the "Hello Garcí" tape controversy centering on allegations of vote rigging during the 2004 elections.

Abalos reiterated that he and Commissioners Resurrección Borra, Florentino Tuason Jr.,

ABALOS / A6



Opposition's idea of truth different, says Garcillano

By Michael Lim Ubac and Norman Bordadora

THE MAN AT THE CENTER of allegations that President Macapagal-Arroyo had cheated in the 2004 presidential election doesn't believe that there will ever be closure to the "Hello Garcí" scandal.

"What closure? There will be no closure for as long as the op-

OPPOSITION / A4

CBCP plea for truth runs into brick wall

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., Norman Bordadora and TJ Burgoño

THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS' DEMAND for the truth in the controversies surrounding President Macapagal-Arroyo appeared yesterday to have run into a brick wall.

Reactions from Malacañang and Congress were solidly behind Sunday's call by the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP).

But each of the protagonists cited one reason or another for the absence of closure to the scandals that nearly unseated the 58-year-old President last year.

In reply, Malacañang washed its hands of any involvement in the aborted "Hello Garcí" probe and said that it was solely Congress that decided not to pursue the impeachment case against Ms Arroyo over charges she stole the May 2004 presidential election. (See related story on this page.)

CBCP / A4



BISHOPS led by Cebu Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal (right) and opposition personalities join a "Silent Majority" prayer rally at the Quezon Memorial Circle.

JOAN BONDOC

Salonga links dissipation of Marcos money to poll fraud

By Mike Suarez

FORMER SENATOR JOVITO R. Salonga said yesterday the dissipation of P35 billion in funds seized by the government from deposed dictator Ferdinand Marcos' Swiss bank deposits was part of the reason President Macapagal-Arroyo could not "tell the whole truth" about the "Hello Garci" election fraud scandal.

In an "Open Letter" to the President, Salonga said he was dismayed by Budget Secretary Romulo Neri's admission at a Senate hearing last November that only P8 billion of the money remained, and that the biggest withdrawal and disbursement took place immediately prior to and after the May 2004 presidential election.



SALONGA

Salonga pointed out to Ms Arroyo that the information he was putting forward to her did not come from press reports or opposition allegations but from the government itself.

"We in Kilosbayan had obtained the Status Report on the Proceeds (forfeited Swiss deposits) submitted by the Development Budget Coordinating Council (DBCC) which, to our shock and dismay, reveals that other than the amount of P8 bil-

lion for human rights victims during the Marcos regime, there are no more funds available from the Marcos Swiss deposits for the poor, landless farmers under the law (CARP) enacted in 1988, when I was Senate President."

Salonga recalled telling Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita and Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo some months ago that a Swiss lawyer who assisted PCGG during his watch had uncovered the existence of between \$1 billion and \$2 billion more in secret Marcos deposits in Europe.

"I hope and pray that for the sake of our suffering people, the recovery of this huge amount - bigger than the \$683 million already recovered - will not be jeopardized by the disappearance of the Marcos Swiss deposits," said Salonga.

Referring to the pastoral letter issued by the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines which called for the continued pursuit of the truth in the Garci scandal, Salonga told the President: "No one can validly assert that the CBCP is against you personally. For truth, like justice, is non-partisan."

He concluded his letter saying, "We respect your high office but we respect truth and justice more."

Asked in an interview what he expected the President to do, Salonga replied, "Justice must take its normal course... I'm against violence or a coup. Let her defend herself in impeachment proceedings."

8 shot dead in Lanao Sur billiard parlor massacre

COTABATO CITY - AT LEAST eight people were killed while six others were wounded when five gunmen strafed a billiard hall in Balabagan, Lanao del Sur, on Saturday, Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) police said Monday.

Senior Supt. Akmad Mamalinta, ARMM police chief, said the attack was apparently part of a *rido* (family feud) as a son of one of the assailants was killed in the same town last month.

Mamalinta said the victims, mostly women and children, were watching a billiard game in Barangay Crossing Lalaguan at around 4 p.m. when the assailants drove past in a van and opened fire with assault rifles. Seven people were killed on the spot.

The wounded were rushed to the Cotabato Regional Medical Center here where one of them died while being treated.

Mamalinta said witnesses had identified one of the attackers and police were searching for him.

The name of the suspect has

been established but we will not divulge his identity so as not to hamper our manhunt. I ordered the chief of police in Balabagan to file the necessary charges against the perpetrator," he said.

The family of one of the assailants apparently had a lingering feud with another family whom the attacker suspected of being behind his son's death. Mamalinta said.

They apparently spotted a lone quarry in the billiard hall then opened fire, killing many, including children and women who had nothing to do with their feud," Balabagan Mayor Amer Sampiano told The Associated Press by telephone. "It was a massacre."

Balabagan is a coastal town of about 30,000 farmers and fishermen.

Pool of blood: 8 dead, 6 hurt



Mindanao since the 1930s, killing nearly 5,000 people and displacing tens of thousands.

About 60 percent of the feuds, which often last generations, remain unresolved, adding to the perception of lawlessness and violence in Mindanao, the studies said.

Abhoud Syed Linda, an expert on Muslim affairs, said most of the feuds stemmed from political and business rivalries or land disputes, but could be over petty issues like a game of basketball.

On Saturday, 20 people were wounded when two gunmen on a motorcycle fired on a crowd leaving a mosque in Jolo, Sulu, in an incident that police said may be linked to a clan war. *Jeffrey Maitem and Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau; AP; Reuters*

De Castro to visit Kuwait

VICE PRESIDENT NOEL de Castro will fly to Kuwait shortly to plead for the life of a Filipino maid who is set to hang for killing her boss there, the Department of Foreign Affairs said yesterday.

Marilou Ranario, a 33-year-old teacher who went to work as a domestic in Kuwait, was sentenced to die by hanging in September for the death of her employer. The woman had alleged her boss insulted her and her fellow Filipinos.

De Castro and other Filipino officials are waiting for their Kuwaiti visas and would "leave as soon as possible. They already have (plane) tickets," DFA spokesman Gilbeno Asique told reporters.

AFP

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Bro. Andrew, ex-De La Salle prexy, dies; 65

By Alcuin Papa

FORMER EDUCATION SECRETARY BRO. ANDREW Gonzales FSC died Sunday of congestive heart failure brought on by advanced kidney disease at the De La Salle University (DLSU) Health Sciences campus in Dasmariñas, Cavite. He was 65.

His attending physician, Dr. Romeo Arfiego, announced Bro. Andrew's death at 5:40 p.m.

Gonzales was confined on Dec. 2 at the DLSU Health Sciences Hospital with a fever and pneumonia. He underwent dialysis after his kidneys failed and was placed in the hospital's intensive care unit on Jan. 26.

Gonzales was president of De La Salle University system in 1978-91 and 1994-98. He was president of Manila Bulletin Publishing Corp. in 1991-98. He was appointed secretary of the then Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) on July 1, 1998, serving up to Jan. 19, 2001.

Gonzales rejoined the Manila Bulletin as president on Sept. 27, 2001. He also became DLSU vice president for academics and research and presidential adviser for academics and research in 2003-05.

Department of Education officer in charge Fe Hidalgo in a statement said Gonzales' "dedicated service to the cause of Philippine education is unmatched."

"His contributions, from the development of the basic education curriculum to the restoration of our heritage schools, are recognized for their ingenuity and importance. The improvements we are seeing now are due in part to the vision and inspiration of Bro. Andrew. His was a life devoted to the service of the education sector. He shall forever serve as an inspiration to us all. He will be missed."

In its own statement, DLSU said that during Gonzales' term as system president, the university "underwent significant developments as an institution of higher learning, particularly in the areas of research, faculty, and program development."

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CBCP plea for truth runs into brick wall

From page A1

"Congress started the investigation and Congress itself closed it down," said Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita.

"They are making it appear that it was Malacañang who was running the investigation," he said. "If they think that we should continue [in order] to [earn] the truth, then let's continue."

Ermita blamed the opposition for botching its chances of probing deeper into the alleged wiretapping of phone conversations between Ms Arroyo and Virgilio Garcillano. The opposition said the recordings showed Ms Arroyo had manipulated the 2004 presidential election—a charge she has vehemently denied.

"In the case of former Commissioner Garcillano, they have been criticizing us for his absence. When he finally appeared to testify, they are now claiming that what he is saying are all untrue. I really don't know what they want," Ermita said.

GMA ready for court cases

"We are open to all just and fair means under the law to ferret out the truth surrounding all controversies affecting the presidency," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye.

"Those who believe they have strong evidence should file a case before the country's antigrift court and give all parties concerned a chance to explain their positions," he told a radio interview.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said that there could be no closure to the Garcillano controversy unless all the audio tapes were authenticated and analyzed.

Aside from the wiretapping drama, Ms Arroyo faced charges that her family had received payoffs from "jueteng," an illegal numbers game, and that she had diverted

P728 million in agricultural funds to her 2004 election campaign.

Truth has many faces

"There was really no closure on so many of these things. That could be a reasonable assessment," said Gonzales. "The truth in all these cases have many faces."

"Just one specific example, where is the truth of the tapes—from the mother tape to the children's tape and to the grandchildren's?" he said.

The Senate, House of Representatives, and whoever has these tapes should submit them to experts to determine their authenticity, Gonzales added.

"Are they endorsing the second impeachment complaint?" said North Cotabato Rep. Emlynou Talino-Santos. "That can be properly addressed when the ban on impeachment proceedings lapses in July 2006."

She said that the truth of whether the President talked to Garcillano to rig the elections was not within the parameters of the House investigation.

Rep. Prospero Pichay of Surigao del Sur said all the leeway had been given to the opposition to pin down Garcillano during his three appearances before the House inquiry into the wiretaps.

"It is our fault the opposition was so clueless in coming up with their questions that they failed to get the answers they wanted," Pichay said.

Bungling, grandstanding

House Minority Leader Francis Escudero of Sorsogon said lawyers were consolidating the evidence in a new bid to throw the book at Garcillano.

"We are readying charges of violation of election laws, rigging of elections against former Commissioner



MEETING WITH WAR VETERANS

President Macapagal-Arroyo greets members of the Veterans Federation of the Philippines during a ceremony in Malacañang yesterday. C. BUNYON

Garcillano," Escudero said. But the leader of the opposition criticized for bungling the impeachment case against Ms Arroyo had yet to say what new evidence it had.

Rep. Teodoro Locsin of Makati City said the bishops reminded the opposition not to grandstand.

He said that during the seven-month wiretapping hearing in Congress the opposition came up with "silly, repetitive questions."

"Instead of trying to get the truth, they're trying to get the attention of the cameras."

A good sermon

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said the CBCP statement was a "good sermon."

"It's a good moral guideline. But the actual fleshing out of the guidelines is our particular sphere of action," he said.

"We should continue the pres-

sure on Gloria to make her resign," Pimentel said. "We need not put Gloria in jail."

Opposition Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson said the CBCP statement was a subtle indictment of Ms Arroyo, and proved the bishops were aware of her attempts to rig the 2004 presidential elections and fix her way out of impeachment last year.

Administration Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago twisted the CBCP for its apparent double standard.

She pointed out that there was also no closure on the "wider" electoral fraud against President Fidel Ramos in 1992 and that the impeachment trial against President Joseph Estrada in 2000 also "stopped at technicalities" because the prosecutors chose instead "to stage a coup d'état at Edsa."

"It never works when the car-

cass of principle is exhumed for public consumption, depending on the discretion of the CBCP. The signs of the times mandate consistency in moral principles," she said.

Wannabe politicians

Santiago said she felt relieved that the CBCP rejected the idea of violence to resolve the crisis.

"What a relief! CBCP has finally admitted that social justice is best pursued under a rule of law, not a disco-type Edsa assembly attended by a few bishops who are wannabe politicians," she said. "Goodbye, Edsa coup d'état."

Before nightfall yesterday, about a dozen senior CBCP members led by CBCP president Angel Lagdameo showed up at the Silent Majority Prayer Movement at the Quezon Memorial Circle.

A surprise appearance was made by Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal of Cebu, a known Arroyo supporter. He joined the crowd of about 1,000, including noisy traditional and leftist politi-

Ignore CBCP at your peril

Bishop Teodoro Bacani warned the President against ignoring the CBCP statement.

"She ignores it at her peril," he told reporters. "If she doesn't listen, it'll be the people who'll move. She'll be in danger because the people will see that she's really not responding to the needs of the country." With reports from Michael Lim Ubac, Armand N. Nocum, Christian V. Esguerra, Christine O. Avendaño and Luigie A. del Puerto; and Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Mine firms warn of job, capital risks

From page A1

and foremost affected," he said.

The mining sector directly employs one million workers and brings economic benefits to 10 million Filipinos, including the workers' dependents, according to Romualdez.

Breach of contract

He said revoking production sharing and similar agreements in the capital-intensive industry would amount to a breach of contract, and could lead to lasting damage to the country's reputation as a capital destination.

"We can't even begin to quantify the amount of money that the government would have to pay back to the investors," Romualdez said.

Some \$300 million in investments were poured into the country last year because of the revived mining industry, according to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Exports

Philippine mining companies exported \$4.6 billion worth of metal and nonmetal products last year, according to the Mines and

Geosciences Bureau.

An environment official said recalling all approved mining concessions and disapproving pending applications would put the government at a huge legal risk.

"We enter into agreements, and we cannot just unilaterally cancel them. That would not be standing on strong legal ground," Deinralo Dimalibot, DENR undersecretary for mining, said.

Dimalibot said suspending or canceling contracts must have a legal basis.

"Otherwise, the government would be paying these investors the money they put in for explorations, operations," he said. "We cannot risk that because the government cannot pay."

Dimalibot, also undersecretary for legal affairs, said the bishops should discuss its call for the repeal of the Mining Act of 1995 with Congress as the DENR was only an implementing agency.

Madrigal bill

Taking her cue from the CBCP, opposition Sen. Jamby Madrigal yesterday filed a bill repealing the Mining Act of 1995, saying it was

about time the "wholesale exploitation" of the country's resources was stopped.

Administration Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago disagreed, saying the law should only be amended, not repealed.

"Our country's environment remains in a most dangerous condition due to the present administration policy of opening up our country's last remaining natural resources to wholesale exploitation by transnational mining corporations. This must be stopped now," Madrigal said.

"We can no longer remain apathetic as our national patrimony continues to be plundered for the benefit of the few, while our indigenous brothers and sisters are robbed of their ancestral domains as our air, water and soil are poisoned," she said.

Madrigal said she felt relieved that the CBCP had called for the repeal of the Mining Act and declared it "antifile." She recalled writing CBCP president Archbishop Angel Lagdameo and urging its members "to fight for the environment."

"The Church has responded to

our call; it is now up to all Filipinos to join the fight for life," she said.

Out of the loop

Santiago, however, said that the law should only be amended by establishing a police and "prosecutorial system" for the environment.

"In defending the outmoded nationalist provisions of our Constitution, the bishops are out of the loop in global economics. Under the CBCP world-view, the likely scenario will merely install Filipino exploiters over foreign exploiters," she said.

"To compete in the global economy, the country should open up the development of natural resources to foreign capital," Santiago said.

"However, this should be done in stages, by which foreign equity rises gradually after a certain period of time. Thereafter, foreign equity should then be scaled down back to nationalist levels."

Rehash

Malacañang said the Catholic Church's appeal to have the Min-

ing Act repealed was a rebash of its position against the entry of big foreign mining companies in the country.

Dialogue

Romualdez said the bishops' statement had triggered inquiries by worried members of the local mining chamber, many of them involved in about two dozen major mining projects that took off last year after the Supreme Court upheld the legality of the mining law.

He urged the bishops to accept the chamber's longstanding call for a face-to-face dialogue on the issues raised by the Church.

"We would want to pursue a dialogue with the bishops and maybe they could reach discernment on Philippine mining issues," he said.

Since 1998, the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines has opened channels for a possible dialogue but has not been successful in reaching out to members of the CBCP, according to Romualdez.

Market analysts said the CBCP statement did not affect mining stocks yesterday. With a report from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

Opposition's idea of truth different, says Garcillano

From page A1

position is banking on bugged conversations," said former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano in a phone interview yesterday.

The confessional may be the only way to find the truth, said Rep. Prospero Pichay, an administration ally. The Surigao del Sur congressman said the bishops could ask Ms Arroyo to confess to one of the prelates.

But, Pichay quipped: "What truth are they looking for?"

I can't invent stories

Garcillano denied any "acts of evasion and obstruction," at least on his part, during the seven-month wiretapping inquiry which ended Wednesday.

"In fact, I told them the truth, but they won't listen to me. I can't invent stories. The problem is that they have a concept of truth different from what I've said," Garcillano said.

The 68-year-old Garcillano stressed that the most celebrated inquiry in the history of the House of Representatives failed because the opposition's hands were soiled as well.

"Every time I look at them, I see blood in their hands," he said. He did not elaborate.

Garcillano claimed that the tapped phone conversations between him and Ms Arroyo at the height of the canvassing of votes in 2004 did not "show any agreement to rig the elections."

However, he agreed with the

Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines that the truth should be relentlessly pursued.

"There is an imperative need for leaders of this country to raise the sagging spirit of the Filipino people. They should not hide the truth from their constituents. They must exercise their conscience and not invent stories," said Garcillano, who came out after five months of hiding in December last year.

Ask GMA to confess

Pichay told the Inquirer that the House inquiry on the wiretapping case was not a fact-finding investigation but a hearing in aid of legislation—to plug loopholes in the Omnibus Election Code and the Anti-Wiretapping Law.

"Why don't they just ask the President to confess before one of them [bishops] and ask what she said in order for them to know the truth?" said Pichay.

House Majority Leader Prospero Nogales of Davao City said he also supported the CBCP stand.

"The entire nation wants to know the truth. That is a given. But the search for truth has to be within legal parameters. There are many truths in courts of law that cannot be out due to technical legal processes and problems like admissible evidence," Nogales said.

"This is something we need to live with in the search for the truth," he said.



GARCILLANO



PICHAY

Sandiganbayan allows Erap to see eye doctor

By Nelson E. Flores

THE SANDIGANBAYAN SPECIAL DIVISION yesterday allowed former President Joseph Estrada to get treatment for an infected eye at the San Juan Medical Center.

Estrada's right eye is infected and has affected his vision.

In a seven-page Omnibus Manifestation and Motion, Estrada's lawyer, former Sen. Rene Saguisag, asked the anti-graft court's Special Division to allow the former president to be seen by an ophthalmologist, based on the recommendation of Dr. Lorenzo Jocson, Estrada's personal physician.

In open court, Jocson said that he visited Estrada last Jan. 21 and Jan. 25 at the detention center in Tanay, Rizal, and noticed "swelling and puffiness of the right eye."

Estrada had complained of "blurring vision and bi-temporal headaches," he said.

Jocson, a surgeon, said he initially thought Estrada's eye condition was caused by an insect bite and prescribed pain killers and anti-histamines.

Although the puffiness around Estrada's right eye subsided, his eyelid was drooping, "virtually, hindi na makakita yung isang mata (one eye cannot see)," Jocson said, adding that the condition should be looked at by an ophthalmologist.

Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio did not oppose Estrada's request for a medical examination, but stressed the need for him to be transferred to the Veteran's Memorial Medical Center for the duration of his plunder trial.

This proposal was opposed by Estrada's defense lawyers for fear the facility could be bugged.

Villa-Ignacio said that it had been at least nine days since

Estrada initially complained about his eye. If the former president had been detained at the VMMC, he would have received medical care right away, he said.

Former Manila City Prosecutor Jose Flaminiano, who is also a member of Estrada's legal defense team, said VMMC would have a "chilling effect" on Estrada and potential witnesses of the defense panel.

Flaminiano said the government had no respect for a person's right to privacy, as shown in recent developments. He added that the intelligence service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines has been known to misuse its bugging capabilities.

Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice and Special Division chair Teresa de Castro directed the court sheriff, Ed Urieta, to escort Estrada to the hospital. She also ordered the Philippine National Police to provide the usual security arrangement.

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RP growth slower but surprising

From page A1

percent in 2004. Santos said all sub-sectors in industry posted "remarkable growth," except for utilities, which suffered because of reductions in government spending to achieve its fiscal deficit target.

"The economy regained the growth momentum that got derailed during the third quarter," said NSDB Secretary General Romulo Virola. "All major sectors contributed positively to the growth of the economy despite the persistent increases in oil and consumer prices and the political turmoil that continued to hound business and government."

Achievement

Although GDP expansion missed the high end of the government target of 5.3 percent, President Macapagal-Arroyo said that last year's growth was an "achievement," considering the higher oil prices, weaker global demand for Philippine products and political squabbling.

Ms Arroyo said money sent home by a bigger number of

OFWs, many of whom had landed higher paying jobs abroad, provided a strong pillar for the economy.

Remittances were estimated to rise 23 percent to \$10.85 billion in 2005 compared to \$8.81 billion the previous year. More than eight million Filipinos work abroad, representing about a 10th of the country's population.

"Even critics of the economy say we are resilient. We are more than resilient, we are tough," said Dennis Arroyo, director for policy and planning of the National Economic and Development Authority.

David Cohen, director for economic forecasting at Action Economics in Singapore, admitted he and other private sector analysts had harbored doubts the Philippines would post a growth higher than 5 percent.

Q4 growth

"So now I hope people will be satisfied," Cohen said. "It does echo the strong year-end performance we had seen across the region."

The Philippine economy registered a seasonally adjusted

growth of 2.7 percent in the fourth quarter, way below market estimates of 3.2 percent. Even so, it was still the strongest quarterly figure in eight years.

"Despite the upsurge in remittances of the country's OFWs, the continued hike in the prices of goods and services set back consumer spending in the fourth quarter," Virola said.

Although the higher prices of oil and basic commodities crimped consumer spending, consumption grew at a seasonally adjusted pace of 8 percent in the fourth quarter from the third where it rose by only 1 percent.

Consumption makes up about 70 percent of Philippine GDP and the fourth quarter is traditionally a period of brisk spending as people prepare for the Christmas holidays.

Shipments of electronic products, which make up two-thirds of total exports, have suffered from competition with China, especially after Japan's Toshiba Corp. moved a laptop manufacturing plant from the Philippines to China in late 2004.

For the first 11 months of

2005, exports grew by just 2.7 percent from a year earlier. The government had an export growth target of 10 percent for 2005, but the central bank had said exports might only rise by 6.0 percent. Exports grew by 14.1 percent in 2004.

Gov't forecast

The government expects GDP growth to pick up this year to 5.7 to 6.3 percent. While that December forecast is below the government's original goal of 6.3 to 7.3 percent, it is well above the median forecast of 4.7 percent taken from a Reuters poll of analysts.

Analysts see slower consumer spending as a key risk to growth this year, as Filipinos cope with an expected rise in the value-added tax rate next month to 12 percent from 10 percent.

The expanded VAT is a key part of the fiscal reforms aimed at raising chronically weak revenues and ensuring a balanced budget by 2008 at the earliest.

"For 2006, the global picture remains supportive and there is reason to hope that the Philip-

pines can participate, especially with continued strength in remittances," Cohen said. "However, rising oil prices can again potentially derail everything."

The continuing political crisis hounding the Arroyo administration would remain the major challenge to the economy this year, according to analysts.

Ms Arroyo survived an impeachment bid in Congress last year, but her popularity remains in the doldrums over allegations she cheated in the 2004 polls. Allies have deserted her and calls for her resignation continue.

Increased spending

Even so, Santos said a recovery in agricultural production and increased infrastructure spending should also help the economy achieve the government's GDP growth target this year.

"The challenge now is to sustain and accelerate growth to a level where we can significantly raise the standard of living of majority of Filipinos," Santos said.

Dennis Arroyo, who is not related to the President, said a boom in

the mining industry and huge revenues from the higher consumer tax could generate up to P77.5 billion in extra revenue this year.

Since the Supreme Court in December 2004 threw out a legal challenge to the law that liberalized the mining sector, 24 mining projects have generated \$339.7 million in investments, creating some 5,000 jobs.

Santos said that while the fiscal position remained weak, it was continually improving.

The budget deficit is expected to fall to P124.9 billion, or 2.21 percent of GDP this year, from P146.5 billion in 2005, he said.

But Solita Monsod, an economics professor at the University of the Philippines, voiced concern over the way the Arroyo administration was dealing with the huge budget deficit. She said the government should be careful about cutting down on expenditures and instead raise more revenues.

Monsod said cutting government expenditures would adversely affect economic growth. With reports from Gil Cabacungan Jr., AP, AFP and Reuters.

GMA presents P1B in benefits to cops

From page A1

she had asked Pag-Ibig to "rev up" its shelter generation program for policemen."

Ms Arroyo said she had also talked to Carlito Puno, chair of the Commission on Higher Education, to open 1,000 new scholarship slots to children of police personnel "who have fallen and who have been wounded in action."

(Earlier, officials unveiled the PNP Heritage Park, at the center of which is a monument with marble walls bearing the names of policemen who died in the line of duty.)

On top of these, she called on Congress to pass the budgetary allocation for compensation so that 120,000 members of the PNP and other civil servants could re-

ceive an average 8-percent increase in their take-home pay.

Bona fide poor

She acknowledged that many PNP personnel were "bona fide" members of the poor."

"Before our fiscal reforms, we were expecting so much of our policemen without giving much to our police. But, to those from whom much is expected, much must also be given," she said.

Ms Arroyo said that in the next few days the government would release a series of Saros (Special Allotment Release Order) worth P1 billion for the PNP so it could hire more police personnel and buy more handguns and patrol cars.

For the next five years, the government will hire 15,000 police

personnel and purchase 25,000 handguns and 2,500 new patrol cars for them, according to the President.

She said 15 percent of the slots for new recruits would be reserved for women.

Phone lines, too

To help fight crime better, the President said she had ordered 50 more telephone lines to be opened for the PNP emergency response network.

Ms Arroyo also extolled the police for their commitment to protect and defend the country against the pirates who "prefer to pillage our gains."

There are dark places where the sunlight of freedom and hope does not shine, and there are dark and evil people who reside in the shadows who wish to do our na-

tion and our people harm," she said.

The President said the police knew who these people were—kidnappers, criminals, terrorists, drug dealers and destabilizers "who are working to plant fear in the people every day."

She called the police "heroes" deserving of the faith, respect and the applause of the people.

Ensure loyalty

Police officials did not see Ms Arroyo's promises to the PNP as an attempt to buy off and ensure their loyalty to her scandal-ridden administration.

"These are long-delayed requirements," said Chief Supt. Victor Boco, head of the Bicol police, referring to the handguns and patrol cars.

"She does not have to do that. We've always been behind her administration," Boco said when asked if he thought Ms Arroyo's promises would help cement the police's loyalty to her.

Senior government officials have probably found the time to really listen to the problems of the police force, according to Boco.

"We know what we lack, and I can speak for my region. Here, we really have problems with mobility," said Chief Supt. Ely de la Paz, head of the Eastern Visayas police. "If those are given, that will really help us a lot."

Other high-ranking officers echoed similar observations.

"We're not being bought with these promises," said Chief Supt. Joel Goltiao, head of the Police Community Relations Group.

"Where do we get these things,

anyway? Of course, they'd come from the government," he said.

In his speech, PNP Director General Arturo Lomibao said that for the police to deliver effective services to the public, the police would need 50,000 more men, 20,000 more handguns and 734 more police stations.

Of the 1,500 or so police stations nationwide, one third or roughly 500 need patrol cars, he said.

Also, 180 troop carriers are needed to quickly move police personnel to the regions, he said.

Reacting to Ms Arroyo's speech, Lomibao said more resources meant "better performance is expected from the PNP."

He dismissed those who saw the benefits as Ms Arroyo's way of buying police support as people who were just "sowing intrigues."

Abalos, other Comelec execs reject quit call anew

From page A1

Mehol Sadiain and Rufino Javier would not resign because doing so would give the impression that they were guilty of wrongdoing.

The Comelec has an ugly public reputation. Results of a Social Weather Stations survey conducted at the height of the wiretapping issue in July last year gave the poll body a negative 27 trust rating.

Two of the current commissioners—Javier and Sadiain—will finish their terms on Thursday, giving Ms Arroyo a chance to fill the vacancies as well as a third seat that has been vacant since June last year.

Romeo Brawner, who assumed his post in September last year, is the only commissioner whose name has not been dragged into the scandals.

Trial court

Abalos deplored the accusations against the Comelec, saying these were never brought before any trial court.

"That's the trouble when

Automated 2007 elections look dim

By TJ Burgoña

WITH LESS THAN TWO YEARS

to go, IT experts are not that optimistic that the country's election system could be fully automated in time for the 2007 midterm elections.

Gus Lagman, adviser of the Information Technology Foundation of the Philippines, admitted yesterday that the timetable for such an automated system would be too "tight."

"We're only 17 months away. It would take three months before that (modernization) law

could be passed. So we're left with 14 months. And then the bidding process normally takes several months, maybe 90 days," Lagman told a Senate hearing on the electoral system.

"That's going to leave us 11 months to procure and implement the system, and educate the voters," he added.

Educating the electorate on the new system would also take several months, he stressed.

Elena Van Tooren, president of the Philippine Computer Society, said it would take at least two years to implement an auto-

mated system.

She cautioned against rushing into a system that was being tried only for the first time.

She also said that, owing to many questions about the credibility and integrity of the whole process, "it may take a while to build this credibility and transparency in the process."

Lagman, Tooren and other IT experts appeared at the hearing on three Senate bills seeking to amend RA 8436, which authorized the Commission on Elections to use automated counting machines in

the May 1998 elections.

The hearing was conducted by the committee on constitutional amendments, chaired by Sen. Richard Gordon.

Lagman said an automated system could be in place before 2007 if RA 8436 was quickly amended or if a special bidding process was held.

"It's doable, but we have to move very fast. The law must be amended as quickly as possible, there should be a special bidding process so we can speed this up," he said later in an interview.

He read the statement midway during the budget hearing, which lasted for only 15 minutes after Arroyo insisted that the PCGG chair answer his questions.

Gari acted alone

"The case is pending; we'll wait for its [resolution]," Abalos

said, referring to the graft case being investigated by the Ombudsman.

With regard to the wiretap scandal, Abalos said former Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano acted alone. The wiretapping controversy involved sup-

posed conversations between Garcillano and President Macapagal-Arroyo to tamper with the 2004 vote.

Abalos said Comelec officials were willing to undergo a judicial or congressional investigation into the controversy anytime.

James Arthur Jimenez, a director at Comelec's education and information department, said Abalos and the other commissioners would not resign as a matter of principle.

An independent body

"Comelec is an independent body and its members are only removable by impeachment," he told reporters.

Jimenez said that just because Abalos and the others rejected calls for them to resign did not mean the Comelec would not do anything about other points raised by the bishops, such as the need for a modern election process. With reports from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., Armand N. Nocum and Leila B. Salaverria

Joker sees something sinister in PCGG silence

From page A1

the cases against Marcos crony Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr.

Sabio not only refused to reply to Arroyo's questions about an alleged government plan for a compromise deal with Cojuangco, but also ordered his fellow commissioners and PCGG staff not to answer.

After Sabio refused to budge and on the motion of Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, the Senate finance committee slashed to zero the proposed P67 million budget of the PCGG for 2006.

"What is so secretive about the deal that Chairman Sabio would risk losing his budget all because he did not want to answer a very simple question? There's something sinister in this," Arroyo said in a press conference.

Interviewed by reporters, Sabio said he wanted to protect his office but refused to elaborate on how the PCGG could be hurt if

he answered Arroyo's question.

When asked if his answer would have been "incriminating," Sabio said: "Not for us. I'm a new official of the PCGG."

Arroyo said he had received information that negotiations on a compromise agreement on the P130-billion coconut levy fund had been going on for the last two weeks.

"You would think that what (Sabio) knows has the value of a confession. Why can't he just answer the question? The answer will not prejudice him. What worries me is that he could not answer the question of whether the President knew or not," Arroyo said.

First time

"The implication is that the President knew but (Sabio) did not want to answer. That is more worrisome. I never expected that this hearing would go this way. This is the first time that a hearing

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Hamas victory may provoke EU aid cut

BRUSSELS—THE EUROPEAN UNION WILL SEEK Monday to hammer out a response to Hamas's shock election win, amid a blunt warning the bloc could cut huge aid payouts if the new Palestinian leadership threatens Israel.

As EU foreign ministers meet for regular talks, contacts were also expected with a senior Iranian negotiator on the deepening crisis over Tehran's nuclear plans, ahead of crunch talks in Vienna this week.

The Brussels meeting will be the first chance for the 25-nation bloc's ministers to talk since the long-ruling Fatah faction lost last week's Palestinian elections at the hands of the militant Islamic group.

The EU is unlikely to take any

rash decisions: Diplomats stress it has time while waiting for a Palestinian government to be formed, and in the meantime Palestinian Authority head Mahmud Abbas remains its key contact.

But German Chancellor Angela Merkel warned starkly at the weekend, it would be "unthinkable" for the EU to continue to fund the Authority if Hamas—which is on an EU terror blacklist—does not renounce violence against Israel.

"We must wait to see how

Hamas acts and if it doesn't change its positions, it would be unthinkable that such an authority be directly supported by EU funds," said Merkel, whose country is the key EU paymaster.

The EU is the largest financial donor to the Palestinians and also one of the four sponsors of the stalled Mideast peace roadmap. Since 2003 it has given about 500 million euros (\$613 million) annually.

The United States has already warned of cuts in aid if Hamas

does not dissolve its armed wing and renounce threats against Israel, and Israel is pressing the EU to do the same.

"It is up to the EU to ... clarify that there will not be any European understanding shown towards a process which would mean the establishment of a government of terror," Israel's Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni said last week.

EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana—who will also attend a meeting of the Mideast Quartet in

London Monday evening, with counterparts from the US, Russia and the UN—has stressed that the EU faces a new situation.

"Everybody hopes that the obligation to act, to work within a political process will have a positive effect on Hamas," told the French daily *Le Monde's* weekend edition.

Also Monday the EU ministers will discuss the Iran crisis, which is coming to a head in the run-up to a meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on Thursday.

AFP

Saudi company boycotts Danish goods to protest paper's cartoons

ABDULLAH AL-OTHAIM, EXECUTIVE PRESIDENT of Al-Othaim Holding Company, reaffirmed yesterday his company's boycott of Danish products until that country's largest daily apologizes for publishing 12 cartoons which he said mocked the Prophet Muhammad, according to a news release sent to the INQUIRER by the Saudi Arabia Embassy in Manila.

The release quoted Al-Othaim as having said that just as Denmark had freedom of the press, Muslims had freedom to buy or not to buy. The company is comprised of five subsidiaries (Al-Othaim Supermarket, Al-Othaim Mall, Entertainment, Training Center and Al-Othaim Commercial Group) and owns around 60 branches across the Kingdom.

Al-Othaim's decision, which he said included a boycott of any supplier that includes Danish products, may help to impact SR1.3 billion worth of exports to Saudi Arabia.

Denmark has been the target of protests, particularly in the Middle East since the publication of the cartoons in the private-run *Jyllands-Posten* newspaper last September.

The 12 published cartoons included a portrayal of the prophet wearing a time-bomb shaped turban and showing him as a wild-eyed, knife-wielding bedouin flanked by two women shrouded in black.

Muslims consider images of Mohammed as blasphemous.

The cartoons have sparked an uproar in the Muslim world. Aside from Saudi Arabia, there have been campaigns for Danish products to be boycotted in Kuwait.

On Sunday, Libya said it was closing its embassy in Denmark in protest against the publication there last year of caricatures of the prophet Mohammed, amid a rising tide of anger in Muslim countries.

In light of the attacks against the prophet Mohammed and the silence of the Danish authorities, Libya has decided to close down its diplomatic representation in Copenhagen," the Libyan foreign ministry announced in a statement run by the official Jana news agency.

The statement added that Libya would take "retaliatory economic measures against Denmark."

The Danish government "vigorously condemns these attacks as well as the fact that Danish flags have been burnt in the Arab world (on the West Bank) and expects the governments of these countries to do the same," Danish Foreign Minister Per Stig Moeller said in a statement.

Moeller said such acts were "worrying" as Denmark "normally maintains a good dialogue with the Arab world and has played a constructive role at the international level in the Middle East peace process and the promotion of dialogue and understanding."

He said he would be talking to fellow European Union foreign ministers in Brussels and the Danish government would decide in the light of its talks what further contacts it should make to resolve the issue.

The boycott has extended to companies such as Novo Nordisk (pharmaceuticals) and Grundfos (pumps) according to the Danish industries' federation.

Also adversely affected is Arla Foods, Europe's second-largest dairy company and the leading Danish exporter to Saudi Arabia, where it sells an estimated two billion kroner (\$328 million) worth of products every year.

"More and more supermarkets are taking our products off their shelves and don't want fresh supplies because consumers no longer want to buy our brand," Arla Foods spokesperson Louis Honore said. "The situation is very serious."

Arla Foods sales staff had been summoned by major Saudi customers who were threatening to stop buying Arla butter and cheeses unless the Danish government officially apologized for the cartoons, he said.

Officials in Muslim countries and various religious bodies have voiced their indignation over the cartoons.

With a report from AFP

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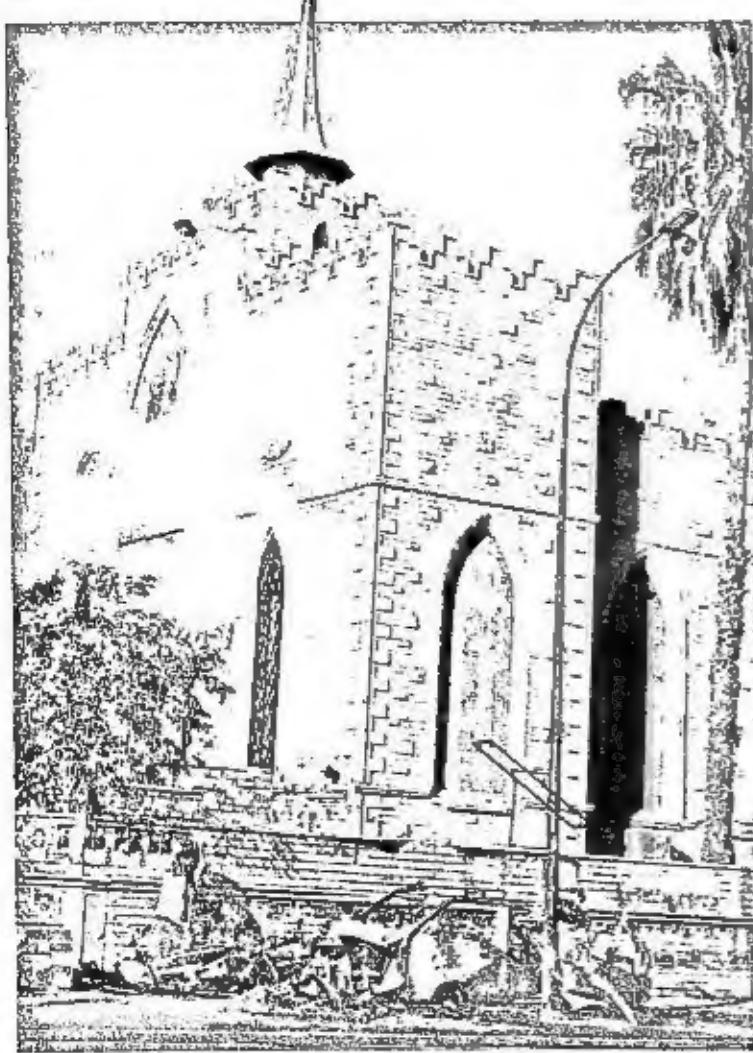
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Bomb attacks in Iraq kill dozens; US reporters hurt



THE WRECKAGE of a car is strewn in front of a Roman Catholic church attacked by a car bomb the previous day in Baghdad Jan. 30. AFP

BAGHDAD—A SUICIDE CAR bomber blew himself up Monday next to a police training center in southeast Iraq, causing dozens of casualties, a day after a rocky session in the trial of Saddam Hussein.

One policeman was killed and 39 others wounded, including four senior officers, in the city of Nasiriyah when the bomber struck during a training session, police said.

"It was an open area where the policemen were training when a suicide car bomber blew up a car," said a police officer from Nasiriyah, 375 km from Baghdad, on Sunday.

Irqi security forces have been prime targets of insurgents attempting to destabilize the country since the March 2003 US-led invasion.

A wave of fresh violence has been unleashed by insurgents in the past two days with dozens killed and scores of others

wounded, as rebels have struck with car bombs near churches and roadside bombs across the country.

One roadside blast wounded two US television journalists near the town of Taji, north of Baghdad, on Sunday.

Sunday's attacks near churches in Baghdad and in the northern city of Kirkuk killed three people and wounded more than a dozen Iraqis. The attacks triggered fears of sectarian tension.

The UN representative in Iraq, Ashraf Qazi, said the bombings outside the churches were "a reprehensible act that can only exacerbate sectarian violence."

He called upon Iraqi authorities to preserve the safety of all worshippers and the sanctity of places of worship.

In central Iraq, Bob Woodruff, news anchor with the US television network ABC, and his cameraman Doug Vogt

were seriously wounded when the vehicle they were in hit a roadside bomb.

The two were embedded with the US army, but riding in an Iraqi security forces armored vehicle ahead of an eight-vehicle convoy at the time of the attack, ABC reported.

They were flown Monday to a US military medical facility in Landstuhl, Germany, after undergoing surgery in Iraq, ABC News president David Westin said.

The latest rebel attacks came amid chaos in the trial of Saddam on Sunday, with the deposed dictator walking out and his half-brother Barzan al-Tikriti being ejected from the court on the judge's order.

The new Kurdish judge Rauf Rasheed Abdel Rahman left his authoritarian mark on his first day by ejecting Barzan from the court and also taking on Saddam in a heated verbal exchange.

"I want to leave the court,"

Saddam, red-faced with anger, told the judge during their argument, to which the judge replied that he could leave the court and then ordered the former dictator out.

"I led you for 35 years and you order me out of the court," retorted Saddam.

"I am the judge, you are the defendant. You have to obey the rules," said the judge.

Saddam said "this is an American court, not an Iraqi court."

The defense lawyers also walked out and have now threatened to boycott the trial completely.

"We are not going to appear in the next session for a number of reasons, the first is that the court was so aggressive against our clients and the lawyers," Najib al-Nuami, one of Saddam's lawyers and a former Qatari minister of justice, said.

AFP

Sabotage suspected in Pakistan train plunge

DOMELI, PAKISTAN—SABOTEURS probably tampered with a section of railway track in Pakistan, causing a train to plunge into a ravine and killing at least three people, a minister said Monday.

Investigators found nuts on the track were unscrewed when they examined the site of Sunday's crash near the city of Jhelum in the eastern province of Punjab, Railways Minister Ishaq Khakwani told AFP.

Six carriages of the express jumped the rails and three fell into the 15-meter gully as it was travelling from Rawalpindi, a city adjoining Islamabad, toward the eastern city of Lahore.

"It is almost confirmed now that it is an act of sabotage. The evidence says it is sabotage," Khakwani said.

"We have seen spanners, the nuts of the fish plates were open," he added, referring to a key track part used to join different rail sections.

The minister said there were "several elements" who could

have been involved with tampering with the rails, adding: "It could be internal, it could be external."

The suspected sabotage was also in a "technically important" area. "Such a derailment in a hilly area could have caused greater loss but luckily there were not many casualties," he added.

The rest of the estimated 400 passengers in the stricken coaches survived the crash and it was a "miracle" that more were not killed, said Maj. Gen. Shaukat Sultan, President Pervez Musharraf's spokesperson.

Two of the dead were women, he said.

Tariq Masood, a rescue worker from a private relief organization who rushed to the scene, said there were suspicions that the rails had been tampered with.

"People say the track was damaged, its fish plates were removed. There are fears it could be an act of sabotage," he told AFP at

the crash site early Monday.

The railways minister said repair work was under way and rail traffic was likely to resume Monday afternoon.

Officials would not speculate in detail about who might have sabotaged the track.

Tribal militants from Pakistan's southwestern province of Baluchistan have carried out a series of bombings on railway lines since January 2004, although the attacks have largely been confined to Baluchistan itself.

Seven people were injured in a bomb blast on a passenger train near the provincial capital Quetta last April.

The rebels are demanding more revenues from Baluchistan's natural resources and increased political rights.

Accidents on Pakistan's aging and overcrowded railway system have themselves claimed hundreds of lives in recent years. AFP



PAKISTAN Army troops and railway workers gather around a derailed passenger train in Domeli, about 100 km southeast of Islamabad Jan. 30. Sabotage to a rail track caused part of the packed express train to derail and crash into a ravine, killing at least three people and injuring more than 40, officials said. AFP

Bird flu virus reaches Cyprus

BRUSSELS/NICOSIA—EUROPEAN UNION authorities have confirmed the presence of the deadly H5N1 strain of avian flu in a sample taken from poultry from northern Cyprus, the European Commission said on Sunday.

It was the latest sign that the virus, found mostly in Asia, was spreading west to infect birds in Europe and humans on the continent's doorstep. Turkey has reported 21 human cases of H5N1, including four deaths.

"The European Commission and the Turkish authorities have been informed ... of the high pathogenic avian influenza H5N1 in a sample taken from the area not under the effective control of the government of Cyprus," the commission said in a statement.

The EU's executive said it had banned the import of live animals or animal products from the Turkish Cypriot enclave into the EU, and added that it would be sending two experts to the area to investigate.

"The EU would be ready to assist with surveillance if needed. In accordance with a European Commission decision, the Cypriot authorities have taken all necessary measures including placing poultry indoors," it added.

A commission spokesperson said an EU laboratory had confirmed the virus in one of two samples from northern Cyprus provided by Ankara, but she did not expect the EU to take any further emergency action at this stage.

"We are confident our measures are holding," spokesperson Barbara Heffernan said, adding that the commission expected to have more details on Monday.

Ferdi Sabit Soyer, prime minister of North Cyprus, which is recognized only by Ankara, told reporters all the poultry in an area within a three-kilometer radius around the village of Incirli, where the two samples were taken last week, had been culled.

"The radius is now 10 km. We are checking all people and cars going in and out of the area to make sure no birds are transported," he said.

"We call on the Greek Cypriots to work with us as this is the only way we can prevent the spread of the disease."

Soyer said no humans were affected by the disease at present. The government was to meet the EU experts later on Sunday and would implement any suggestions.

Greek Cypriot Agriculture Minister Timis Eftymouli said:

"For the present there is no decision to close any of the crossing points and no additional restrictions have been placed by the EU than are already in force."

Bird flu has killed at least 83 people since it reemerged in Asia in late 2003, according to WHO figures.

Experts believe the H5N1 virus is contracted through close contact with infected birds, but fear the virus may mutate to enable it to spread easily among humans, sparking a pandemic that could cause millions of deaths.

European Union veterinary experts last week extended a ban on imports of captive live birds from outside the bloc for a further four months to guard against the spread of bird flu.

Reuters

Japan's elderly take to crime

TOKYO—CRIMES COMMITTED BY elderly people in Japan have risen sharply in the past 15 years, a trend that has officials worried as the population ages rapidly due to longer life spans and a falling birth rate.

Police data show that people aged 65 and older accounted for more than 10 percent of those arrested or taken into custody for crimes other than traffic violations in Japan in 2005, compared with just 2.2 percent in 1990, the Asahi newspaper said on Monday, citing National Police Agency data.

Theft topped the list of crimes committed by the elderly in 2005, while 141 elderly people were arrested for murder—more than three times the number in 1990, the newspaper said.

Nearly one-third of the victims of crimes committed by the elderly in 2005 were spouses, it added.

Agency officials would not confirm the report, which also said the Justice Ministry was seeking funds to research the problem.

In March, an 81-year-old man arrested on suspicion of strangling his 73-year-old wife said he had killed her after a quarrel over food she had prepared, Asahi said.

Nearly one in five Japanese is aged 65 or older, and the ratio is expected to rise to one in four over the next decade as policy makers struggle to deal with a demographic shift that could deal a heavy blow to the economy.

Japanese worries about crime in a land once seen as one of the world's safest have focused in recent years on offenses by foreigners and youth. Despite such concerns, the number of penal code offenses known to police declined by 6 percent in 2004, the last year for which official data has been released.

Reuters

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Reuters



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Pride

THE SOCIAL WEATHER STATIONS LAST WEEK said that amid economic uncertainty, political instability and the exodus of Filipinos for abroad, it found one thing constant in the surveys that it conducted through years: the Filipinos' pride in being Filipino. Mahar Mangahas, SWS president, said: "Pride in being Filipino is very high and impervious to crises. Public morale and equanimity is dented but indestructible." Yearend figures of SWS in 2005 showed that four out of every five Filipinos looked forward to the new year with hope and felt proud to be Filipino.

The disclosures are very reassuring, coming, as they do, in the face of the common misimpression that most of us are ashamed to be identified as Filipinos. There are many things that should make us proud to be Filipinos, despite the pervasive poverty, the unending political turmoil, the widespread corruption and the huge mess that politicians over the past half century or so have made of the country.

We can take pride in our people, the nation's greatest asset. Filipinos are known all over the world as a gentle, hospitable, caring and smiling people. We are a talented, intelligent, creative people, but our talents are stunted in our stultifying political, economic and social environment.

We can take pride in our national heroes who were multi-dimensional figures, not just military leaders or warriors. Our national hero, Jose Rizal, was a Renaissance man—doctor, writer, poet, polyglot, naturalist and agriculturist.

We can take pride in our inventors, one of whom, Eduardo C. San Juan, designed the lunar rover, more popularly known as the moon buggy. It made possible a wide-ranging exploration of the moon's surface during the 1971 Apollo lunar mission. Among other Filipino inventions that are benefiting thousands, if not millions of people all over the world, are the incubator, the fluorescent lamp, the videophone, the one-man band piano (that led eventually to the development of the karaoke), the bread toaster, the reflectorized circular lamp and the power tiller.

We can take pride in our music. Someone once said that you can take everything away from Filipinos, but their music will always remain with them. Filipinos are known all over the world for their musicality and great love of music. It is no wonder that many Filipinos have achieved renown on the world's concert stage for both classical and popular music.

We can take pride in our artistry, in our creative talent and skills which are manifest even in everyday things like furniture, clothes, home décor and paper wrappings of sweets.

We can take pride in our country that is blessed with a good environment and rich natural resources. We have verdant fields, lush forests (that are steadily being denuded by illegal loggers and slash-and-burn farmers) and great lakes, rivers and other bodies of water and unique flora and fauna. A Saudi journalist who visited the Philippines years ago told a Filipino journalist: "God gave us oil but took away the trees, plants and water. In your case, God did not give you oil, but gave you trees, plants and water."

We can take pride in our tourist spots like the Banaue Rice Terraces, the eighth wonder of the world; Boracay, arguably the finest white sand beach on earth; Mount Mayon, the perfect cone; Maria Cristina Falls; Camiguin; Sagada and Baguio; and the whole of Palawan.

We can take pride in our unique political innovations such as People Power which produced Edsa I and Edsa II, the first toppling a corrupt and repressive dictator, and the second ousting an incompetent and plundering president. People Power became the model for the Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia, the Solidarity Movement in Poland, the Rose Revolution in Georgia and the movement that dismantled the Berlin Wall and ultimately led to the reunification of East and West Germany.

Despite the poverty, the political instability, the corruption, the depletion of our natural resources by unthinking people, the exodus of thousands for greener pastures abroad, Filipinos are still proud to be Filipinos. They still see hope for the country. Filipinos are a people struggling to come out and grow to their full potential as human beings. If only they could have a leadership that would inspire them and bring out their greatness, they would virtually have a heaven on earth in the Philippines.



Upheaval's handmaid

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado



past. Unfortunately, "the future," columnist George Will once noted, "has a way of arriving unannounced."

It was "natural" for the Left and the Right to confer with each other, retired Commodore Rex Robles soothingly said at the same forum: "They were once together in detention.... Remove the ideology, you will see that the agenda is the same—the search for a good life."

Haydee Yorac, Jose Diokno, Chino Roces, Teodoro Locsin Sr., Jovito Salonga, among other people, were imprisoned by Marcos alongside communists. And they worked to secure a good life for Filipinos. Yet, they never advocated blasting the Constitution to smithereens. Installing a junta, as the rebels demand, or a poliburo, as the comrades insist, constituted idiocy for them.

Robles says this proposed union hasn't moved beyond "confering." It's a pre-nupcial chat then? About what? Sharing of arsenals? Co-financing perhaps? Or dividing positions, if swept into power? Reform policies?

When recaptured, Marine Capt. Nicomedes Pandan's reform plan was to "taunt" the military with videos of him at Cebu's Camp Lapu-Lapu. That's breath-taking—in its bankruptcy. Such insolvency does little to uproot embedded injustices—corruption, skewed wealth, inept government—that stoke discontent in the countryside and in military camps.

Our so-called democratic structures would be ripped apart by a rebellion of the rich if radical reforms were implemented, says Ateneo University's John Carroll, S.J. So, our leaders settle for "tokenism" or lip service reforms.

"Those who make reforms impossible make revolution inevitable," John Kennedy once cautioned. Martial law dictatorship by Ferdinand Marcos made people power inevitable.

Both the regime and opposition should not be lulled by the unavoidable divorce in this prospective marriage of convenience between communists and rebels. Lip service has always been upheaval's handmaid.

(E-mail: juan_mercado@pacific.net.ph)

Holier than him

THERE'S
THE RUB

Conrado
de Quiros



people offering? Who is a credible alternative?"

First off, I agree completely, that the present crisis is a moral one, it owes to a question of right and wrong, justice and injustice, good and evil. The question is whether GMA is the legitimate president of this country, and there is the "Hello, Garc!" tape to say she isn't. That cannot be excused as "lapse of judgment" by any stretch of the imagination—not in a democracy at least. That won't go away. That certainly cannot be snowed under by economic considerations or a need to survive, as suggested by that phrase "let's move on." "Moving on" is not just idiotic in the face of an illegitimate rule, it is impossible. It's not just that, gripped as it is by a moral crisis, the government has no time to attend to solving poverty. It is that having no scruples of a moral kind, it has no intention of solving poverty.

That's what I've been saying about Charter change: If you cannot solve so fundamental, so elemental, so stark a problem as determining who ought to rule, how can you hope to solve so complicated, so convoluted, so multi-layered a problem as what system of government to have? You have a president (or prime minister) who steals your vote, you will have a president (or prime minister) who steals your taxes. You cannot move on, you can only move backwards.

But I part ways with the CBCP in some of its other propositions. Chief of them: Why do you have to restrict yourself to constitutional means to oust an unconstitutional government? As I said earlier, what has demolished this country's natural aversion to coups is that the current government is the product of one.

The GMA government is arguably a coup, wrought not by guns but by Garc, not by a cabal of soldiers but a gang of carpetbaggers. I myself have repeatedly called for civil disobedience, capped by not paying taxes. Why should I yield my hard-earned money to an illegitimate collector?

More importantly, I do not know why the people should present a "credible alternative" for the Church to ask a usurper to resign. At the very least, when we catch a thief who has stolen our cell phone, we get our cell phone back as a matter of course. We do not have to prove we have better uses for the cell phone than the thief before we can get it back. You catch someone stealing votes, you oust her as a matter of course. You do not have to prove another person can do a better job.

At the very most, as I've also kept saying, contrary to popular opinion, the question of who should replace GMA is not the hardest thing to answer, it is the easiest. Who should replace GMA is who the people want, which is expressed in the vote. What is the problem? The problem is that GMA stole the vote. What is the solution? The solution is to give back the vote to the voters. I do not particularly care if the voters vote for Noli de Castro or even Erap again, I do not particularly care if the voters vote for a dog or a cat. In a democracy, the one who governs is the one the voters voted for.

The idea of the people offering an alternative, credible or not, doesn't make things better, it makes things worse. It adds fuel to the fire. It contributes to a nasty turn in Philippine politics, which is that the vote has become irrelevant people now just think of decreeing what is good for the country, namely themselves. That was what GMA and her cabal did. Why should we want to do the same thing? Every time I get asked that question, "But whom do you want to replace GMA?" my answer has always been, "That is not for me to say, that is not for you to say, that is for the voters to say."

But we're getting there, with no small help from angels.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 31, 2006

Pastoral letter should be read in its entirety

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cumanan



IF READERS ARE TO GO BY WHAT SOME MEDIA have chosen to highlight in the recent pastoral letter of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, titled "Renewing Our Public Life Through Moral Values," they could easily be led to conclude that the bishops have become very hostile to the administration. I read their four-page pastoral in its entirety and found it to be balanced in its treatment. It attacked the administration in some parts and the opposition in others, but it reserved its sharpest indictment for the "destructive" and "chaotic" politics in our midst, while offering solutions to the "moral crisis." I hope the major newspapers would publish it in its entirety, so that readers would get the clear message of our pastors. I found myself agreeing with a number of issues raised there. It was the second pastoral letter, which dealt with mining issues, where I found myself disagreeing with the bishops.

The first pastoral letter cited the "acts of evasion and obstruction of the truth, as in the case of the wiretapping and Garcillano tapes controversy" and said the search for the truth has to be pursued "relentlessly" through legal and constitutional means. But the bishops also denounced those "who seem to use 'the search for truth' as a means of furthering their political ambitions." They lamented how "truth has become a victim of political partisanship as well as of transactional politics," resulting in a "paralyzing gridlock in the political sphere as partisan interests prevail over the demands of the common good."

The bishops stressed that the people have "enough of this destructive politics" that has caused "widespread confusion" and "apathy and cynicism." They cited the people's "loss of trust in political leaders from left, right and center, and worse still, in the political institutions themselves which are perceived to be corrupted." The bishops traced the cause of our moral crisis to "the erosion of moral values," manifested by the prevailing "deceit and dishonesty, corruption, manipulation and a deadening preoccupation with

narrow political interests."

What is their answer to the moral crisis? A return to the "gospel values" and what they call the "gospel mandate." Here they cite "the many men and women of different faith traditions" who are working selflessly and sincerely to build our nation, such as good and decent police and military men, dedicated laity and religious, NGOs and other associations, and "public servants struggling for integrity and authentic reform of the corrupted institutions they are part of." It is from these inspiring good men and women, said the bishops, that they draw optimism that evil will be overcome. The bishops renewed their commitment to place the Church and its people in the forefront of the campaign to transform our sick society.

One of the bishops' most laudable points is their reiteration that they "do not condone any resort to violence or counter-constitutional means in resolving our present crisis." They wisely see that such measures would only bring about "new forms of injustice, more hardships and greater harm in the future." I wish they had given this point even stronger emphasis, but their unequivocal stand is in stark contrast to the Senate's deafening silence on rumors of a coup. In this regard, the House opposition is more patriotic. Cavite Rep. Gilbert Remulla has been quoted as saying that his group would never countenance a coup attempt.

Where I take issue with the bishops is on specific points, such as their advocacy of a constitutional convention over a constituent assembly. As

we all know, a convention is far more expensive (estimated to cost P8 billion, which the cash-strapped government doesn't have) and will take forever to change the charter. Cha-cha advocates say by the time the convention finishes its job, we will have been overtaken by Vietnam and ranked with Cambodia and Myanmar.

I found quite disturbing the bishops' stand on mining, as expressed in the companion pastoral letter. They propose the repeal of the Mining Act of 1995, whose validity the Supreme Court upheld in December 2004. The Court said that entry of foreign capital into large-scale mining is legal and constitutional. Since that ruling, the government expects some \$90 billion in foreign investments to be poured into this sector, and 23 major mining projects are in the pipeline. In the first nine months of last year alone, mining investments were said to have reached \$350 million. The bishops, however, reiterating their 1998 opposition to large-scale entry of foreign capital, want the government to cancel existing contracts for fear they would destroy the ecological balance and deprive Filipinos of their patrimony.

The problem with this point of view is that a big percentage of Filipinos live in abject poverty even if this country is one of the richest in the world in terms of mineral deposits. To my mind, and to many right-thinking Filipinos, it is truly criminal to let our people languish in subhuman conditions when God has given our country plenty of means to help them. The bishops are afraid our people would be unjustly deprived when we open the door to big foreign capitalists. Their reaction is a throwback to the Marcos era and shows the heavy influence of leftist elements in the Church and society. But the inequity could be remedied by putting the necessary safety nets, and once-poor economies such as Chile have shown that this can be done successfully. To let our huge mineral wealth remain idle beneath the earth while the majority of Filipinos remain very poor is not charity, it is stupidity.

Momentum?

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David



"THEY DID NOT REALLY PURSUE THE TRUTH" is Archbishop Angel Lagdameo's dry assessment of the impeachment proceedings against President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo last year. Lagdameo, the newly elected president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, was speaking at a press conference during which he read one of two CBCP statements on the national situation.

Echoing Lagdameo's point of view, the bishops' statement called on President Macapagal-Arroyo to pursue "relentlessly" the truth behind the "Hello Gato" tapes and the allegations of electoral fraud these gave rise to. They also firmly opposed moves to cancel the 2007 elections, which is one of the "carrots" being waved at lawmakers and local government officials to get them to join the campaign to amend the Constitution.

Though the CBCP statement falls short of calling for Arroyo's resignation (it says the country has no real alternative to her, yet), the pastoral letter is seen as a step farther than the one the bishops issued in July last year, when oppositionists were counting on them to help speed up the momentum created by Cory Aquino, the "Hyatt 10," the Liberal Party, and business groups.

THE BISHOPS are also joining this time the campaign to get the Comelec commissioners to resign, saying the calls for their resignation and even prosecution "should not be lightly brushed aside." So while they oppose cancellation or postponement of the 2007 polls, they urge political leaders to get cracking on electoral reforms, including, as they put it, "(transforming the Comelec) into a competent and reliable body beyond reproach."

Speaking of electoral reform, the appointment of retired Chief Justice Hilario Davide, who is also a former Comelec chair, to head a body to study ways to improve the electoral system is ostensibly part of the campaign. But this early, Davide has come under fire for accepting a position from someone, so critical of the President, who bears the biggest responsibility for the destruction of our electoral system.

I'm willing to give the former "Chief" the benefit of the doubt, at least as far as his motivations are concerned. But let's see how he conducts himself and what conclusions he recommends, especially with regard to the kapit-kutu Comelec.

IN "FAHRENHEIT 9/11," Michael Moore's scathing exposé of the duplicity employed by the Bush administration to whip up support for the Iraq invasion, the controversial documentary maker sneaks into a briefing for potential investors in "post-invasion" Iraq. The speaker talks of the tremendous profits to be made in the country, from reconstruction to oil, from security services to food deliveries.

But little did even Moore know how much money would not only be spent, but even wasted and squandered by American-led occupation authorities. "Tens of millions" of government dollars, a US-government audit found, have been lost, frittered away by careless spending, useless projects, if not outright fraud and theft. An American soldier is reported to have blown as much as \$60,000 in reconstruction funds in a casino in this country. And in some cases, cash simply disappeared.

The story is based on reports of an audit of the Coalition Provisional Authority and deals with contracting in south-central Iraq, described as one of the country's "least hostile" regions. And as the Associated Press story details, there's more than enough incendiary material in the "dryly written" reports for one or two Moore documentaries. I'm also looking forward to how Jon Stewart of "The Daily Show," as well as Jay Leno, Conan O'Brien and David Letterman would riff on the waste and thievery.

As the wire report states, not only did the thieves

cheat American taxpayers and the Iraqi people (much of the cash came from Iraqi oil revenues), they even ended up killing some folks, that is, apart from the hundreds killed by invasion forces and in the continuing insurgency. In one instance, three Iraqis plummeted to their deaths in a defective elevator in the Hillah General Hospital, an elevator that its contractor had been paid over \$600,000 to install.

In another documented case, auditors found that a contractor paid over \$100,000 to replace the pump and fix Hillah City's swimming pool had "merely polished the old plumbing to make it look new and collected the money." When the pool was filled, "the water came out a murky brown and the pool's reopening had to be canceled."

EVEN by Philippine standards, the amount of graft and corruption that is taking place in Iraq is staggering. Only about a quarter of the \$23 million entrusted to military and civilian officials to pay contractors found its way to them. On the other hand, an extremely fortunate contractor was paid \$14,000 on four separate occasions for the same job.

The auditors recommended the filing of criminal charges against some of those involved, and in other cases, it asks the US ambassador to Iraq to try to recoup the money—apparently from Iraqi contractors or American contractors in Iraq.

I don't know how or if the charges against the incompetents in the reconstruction authority—some of whom worked in George W. Bush's campaign—will prosper. But at least the audit reports are a start, though much will depend on how seriously the White House considers the charges and how determined it is to bring the wrongdoers to justice.

But I doubt it. The story may paint the picture of a bumbling, slap-happy reconstruction effort throwing too much money at too many projects, but thevver on such a scale could not have taken place without people fairly high up knowing about it. The question to ask now is what Dubya intends to do—and where the axe will fall.

The last of the rain forest

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper



FURNITURE SHOPS IN BAGUIO FOR THE PAST two to three years have been displaying mountains of items made from kamagong (ebony or iron wood), whole tables, boxes, chairs, stools, vases and massive bowls from wood so hurriedly sawn and carved that cracks have begun to appear. After the carnage in Aurora and Quezon two years ago (that is where the wood came from), I asked the owner if he didn't realize the amount of blood on those items. He shrugged and said that if he didn't buy the wood, someone else would, which is probably the same rationale used by drug dealers and other criminals.

Numerous stalls along Marcos Highway display more kamagong planks and furniture made from it. Officials of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources must have been stricken deaf, blind and mute, both in Baguio and in Quezon Province not to notice the existence of these enterprises.

It is obvious from the lack of appreciation exhibited by people, whose idea of happiness revolves around name brands and the latest craze and fad from abroad, that there is also a lack of knowledge of just how blessed their country is. But then who is there to tell them how unique their country is and that, for example, among mammals that cannot fly, 85 percent are found only in the Philippines (the tree shrew, tarsiers and the tree squirrels are examples). There are also 172 species of birds unique to the Philippines, but of these 75 are endangered.

All of these depend on the forest for survival. We have the third-highest number of globally threatened bird species. It's really distressing to know that Cebu (which has zilch forest cover) had 14 species of birds found nowhere else. Three of these are now extinct and of those that remain, there are fewer than a hundred. Of the Cebu flowerpecker, there were only four species left. These birds are probably doomed as Cebu is bound to continue rationing its water and investing in desalination

plants. Obviously, timber is a source of quick profit but only for a very small group. The other day, there was a news item in the papers regarding flash floods in Aurora, Quezon and Isabela with corresponding loss of lives and harvests. It didn't seem like anyone was particularly aghast or appealed—bothered, perhaps but only momentarily. This is after all a yearly event and the numbers were not enough to shock people into action. (Besides, officials have other preoccupations like replacing incumbents with themselves or their own people.) Foreign donors may have shaken their collective heads because of the amounts that have been donated to mitigate soil erosion and the uselessness of the ban against illegal logging.

I don't really know whether people are aware that soil erosion causes siltation on coral reefs from the muddy water that flows out to sea and that dams like the one in the Magat watershed should have lasted 95 years but because of erosion its life span has been reduced to 40. Destructive flooding has everyone beating his chest in remorse for two seconds before going back to his own life.

It's not like officials aren't aware of the drought that affects several areas of the country caused by rainwater that instead of entering the ground water system flows down denuded slopes and can no longer feed the rivers during the dry season. In Iloilo, only two percent (maybe less) of the watershed is forested. This means that during the dry months, water has to be rationed.

It isn't the only place in the country where water has to be rationed, and the situation can only worsen. You read figures like 450 sq km of agricultural land in Panay being affected, resulting in 118,000 tons of rice lost. Do we conclude that the DENR is helpless or it doesn't care, and neither do the local officials?

Would you believe that for the first time in its 420-year history, Naga City was flooded in 1993 when a typhoon passed through the area of Mt. Isarog? People died, the water rose up to two meters in city streets, and economic damage was tremendous. Deforestation was blamed, and everyone knew who was responsible, but nothing happened. Also 27 species of birds found in the national park of Isarog in 1961 had become extinct a quarter of a century later—a dismaying 20 percent of 135 species.

The tragedy of it (aside from the loss of life) is that there are over 500 species of mammals, birds, lizards and frogs found only in the Philippines specifically in its rain forests. Most of them are endangered and, even as we write, the logging continues threatening the flora as well before any scientist has the chance to examine their potential. It does nothing to my sense of national pride to know that there are more endangered species in the Philippines than in any other place in the world when you consider the size of the country.

In Ormoc, there is no longer any watershed and the area is now planted to sugar cane. It is rumored to be owned by just six families. The biggest property supposedly is the mayor's. When a flood hit the area some years back, around 7,000 people died. In one section of the city, 220 survived among the 2,500 residing there. I wonder what the mayor thought and whether he cared one way or another. If he or anyone with the capacity to act wanted to do something about it, then reforestation would have been started and a flood control program put in place.

Snooping

WATCHING PEOPLE IN THEIR UNGUARDED MOMENTS is a habit I have developed over time. I am no spy or mentally deranged snoop, but merely a curious observer of people, their natural behavior and their eccentricities.

I used to believe that people behaved differently in certain situations, but constant observation has convinced me that we all deal with life's complexities in surprisingly the same fashion. Our eyes sparkle at the sight of our beloved, we get a thrill from discovering a crisp envelope in our mailbox, we flare up when our significant other shows up one hour late for dinner and we get annoyed at finding a long queue of shoppers at the counter when all

we are buying is a roll of toilet paper.

Commuting is another art in which I excel. And I like it because it gives me the opportunity to see people as they are.

Once while riding a jeepney on my way to work, I almost got into an argument with a young woman who squeezed her butt into the tiny space beside me. I told her there was room for her on the other side, but she just ignored me. I looked at the passengers behind the jeepney driver, and saw the reason the snooty coed refused to seat there. An Aeta husband and wife were feeding their two children. The father was tearing a biscuit wrapper for his young son while the mother was breastfeeding her little bundle of joy.

Since I felt very uncomfortable, I grabbed a seat beside the Aetas. The student let out a sigh of relief after getting rid of me. There was not even a trace of remorse on her face for being rude to the katutubo. I felt like giving her P5 so she could buy some good manners.

The Aetas seemed to be content in their own little world, oblivious to the fact that they had just been victimized by a bigot. The color of their skin did not make them less human. We were of the same race and forever it would be.

Malls are a convenient place for observing people, because the strata of society are well-represented there, from the ABC classes to the jologs. But sadly social prejudice is also very much in evidence in the malls.

It's very obvious that customers who are dressed to the nines are treated differently from those who are clad in worn-out jeans and faded shirts. Sales clerks go out of their way to serve the former. From the moment these demi-gods step into the store, sales people would attend to them earnestly, silently telling them that they are at their disposal. However, many of the same sales clerks mutate into Mr. Hyde when they deal with customers who are not so well-dressed. Sure they will still pay close attention to such customers—but only to make sure they would not hide anything in their bags or their trousers. Strange how some people judge others by the clothes they wear, when clothes merely cover one's skin but not one's character.

I have a confession to make. I often eavesdrop on conversations, thought I seldom do it intentionally. It's just that I can't help overhearing other people's conversations. And this happens frequently because I'm a fast-food junkie!

You'd be surprised at the number of interesting characters that abound in any fast-food joint. The most common are women who think that their pathetic love lives are the most important thing in the whole universe. One time, I overheard a woman badmouthing a former boyfriend who had left her for a guest relations officer in an obscure girlie bar. If curses could kill, her poor clueless boyfriend would have been dead many times over.

It was also in a fast-food outlet that I found confirmation for my theory that most women look at their mothers-in-law as a threat to their marriage. One time, I heard a woman who must have been in her mid-30s telling a friend she could not stand her nosy mother-in-law. She felt that everything she did was not good enough for her hubby's mother and that she was only hanging on to their marriage for the sake of her husband and children.

On another occasion, I overheard a female employee whining about the injustices she had to suffer in her workplace. It seemed she couldn't get along with her colleagues as well as with her boss. She said her co-workers were a bunch of stupid humanoids ganging up on her and gossiping all day. Welcome to the world of human vultures and serpents.

One incident I will have a hard time forgetting happened when I was still in college. Before the advent of cell phones and text messages, there were phone booths in certain parts of the city and P2 was all you needed to make a call. I was standing in line, waiting for my turn behind a dashing attractive yuppie. The booth was partly open and I was a few inches away so I could hear what he was saying. At one point, he was telling the other party he was sorry he couldn't make it to their date because he had to attend to something urgent and important. After a few minutes, he ended the conversation by saying fervently, "I love you!" As soon as he left the booth, a pretty trolley came rushing to him and they had a passionate kiss before walking away hand in hand.

My jaw dropped! I had just witnessed one of life's greatest mysteries: cheating partners! The nerve of that guy to even call his girlfriend when in truth he was spending the night with another woman.

There are certain facts of life that are not taught in school. These are the things we learn as we explore the real world. They come to us in ways we have not even imagined, but the lessons we gain will see us through our lifetime.

Life is a mystery. Observing human life unfolding before our very eyes can make a lot of difference. We may not approve of everything we discover about life for with good and the beautiful come the bad and the ugly, but learning to accept that there are things we cannot change is a great start. So unless they make it a crime to eavesdrop in public, I will continue to search for new prey.

Sharon Michelle L. Buhatin, 26, is an English instructor at the Tarlac College of Agriculture.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

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Cha-cha and mining

EIGHTY PERCENT OF OUR POPULATION live below the poverty line. Why is this so? Indeed, our country is among the richest in mineral resources. But it suffers from extractive activities, like mining. Mining operations leave nothing but lethal wastes that affect the people's health and livelihood. Mine tailings that spill into lakes and rivers cause massive fish kill and the death of water sources. Most appalling of all, our experience has shown that mining leads to the forcible evacuation of thousands of indigenous peoples and peasant families, or even worse, the death of many.

We have not yet recovered from the effects of Marcopper spill on the island of Marinduque, which led to the evacuation of 1,200 residents after mine tailings filled 26 km of the Makulapit-Boac river system, thus flooding downstream areas and communities and contaminating agricultural lands.

The Marcopper tragedy is only one of

the mining companies exploiting our mineral resources. Hundreds of others are engaged in ongoing mining explorations in other parts of the country, which have resulted in human rights violations. Many lives have been sacrificed in defense of the national patrimony and sovereignty. Many lives continue to be threatened because of the continuing influx of more mining applications and the continuing operation of many mining companies. The struggle to liberate our country and people from the deadly fangs of foreign plunder becomes more challenging in the face of the threats posed by the proposed Charter change which guarantees foreign investments a 100-percent unrestricted exploitation of our patrimonial wealth.

Until now, our country, despite its claims to independence, remains under foreign control. Such control is killing our national economy, sucking our wealth for the enrichment of foreign investors, when

such wealth ought to benefit the Filipino majority most.

It's time to free our country from foreign corporations, as well as from vested interests and greedy bureaucrats. Enough of the human rights violations caused by these so-called "development projects." Cha-cha should not be allowed to pass lest we suffer more from the damning effects of large-scale mining and other extractive operations that practically benefit only foreign interests.

—RODERICK CARPIO,
Kabataan para sa Tribung Pilipino
(KATRIBU),
Polytechnic University
of the Philippines (PUTP),
Mapagbigay Street, Brgy. Pinyahan
Dillman, Quezon City,
katribu.org@yahoo.com

Wage war vs greed to find peace

OUR COUNTRY NEEDS EVENTS LIKE the convincing win of Manny Pacquiao over Erik Morales to unite all of us. It has been a wonderful respite from the political bickerings that always make it to the headlines. I just hope the Pacman fever lasts.

Pacman won by discipline and hard work and by following his trainors' strategy. We, too, need some strategies in order to keep our country going. The problem is that anything anti-government makes it to the headlines even if it is all speculation, and it goes on and on, such that truth is lost.

But there are so many good things happening in our country that deserve the headlines as much as Pacman's victory. The large headlines are sometimes also deceiving, unless one takes the trouble to read the whole article, something which, perhaps, only a few bother to do.

I also subscribe to IHT and they gave some wonderful news about us last Jan.

12 which unfortunately very few of our countrymen must have read. A balik-bayan relative came home a few weeks ago and remarked at how impressed she was at our country's development. A very refreshing statement that ignited some patriotic flame in me.

I've been trying to think why some politicians always vie for the presidential seat when there's already someone there. Is it an innate chauvinistic attitude? We must admit that our President is trying her best in spite of all the bickerings. Why not give her some peace and just start fighting for the presidential seat when her term's end is near?

We just celebrated the feast of our Lady of Peace. Let's ask her for peace for the world, for our country, for our families, and for ourselves. We can only have peace when we make war on our greedy ambitions and selfishness.

—ELAINE SARMIENTO,
15 Sta. Lucia, Pasig City

MSU appointment followed precedent

WE THANK THE INQUIRER AND RYAN D. Rossaro for running the news report "Fight on for MSU chancellorship" in its Jan. 29 issue.

We would like, however, to point out some facts for your readers' better appreciation of the Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology's fight for the retention of its present chancellor.

Chancellor (in holdover capacity) Marcelo P. Salazar joined the MSU-IIT 33 years ago as a faculty member. He was the director of the School of Engineering Technology before being appointed vice chancellor for academic affairs and then chancellor in the year 2000.

In the institute's history, the precedent in reappointing sitting administrators was set when Prof. Manaroc Boransing, the youngest, at 34, then vice president for administration, MSU Main Campus, was appointed dean of the institute, and later as university vice president for MSU-IIT.

He served for three terms, or 16 years, before Dr. Camar A. Umpa became MSU-IIT chancellor in 1989, serving for 10 years before being elected MSU System president.

Boransing is now the education undersecretary for Mindanao Affairs and is credited with jump-starting the MSU-IIT as the first autonomous campus of the MSU System.

—LORNA O. TOLENTINO, acting campus secretary, Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology (MSU-IIT), Iligan City

Cutting contradictions

WE WISH TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING CLARIFICATIONS on some points presented in the editorial titled "Deficit in candor" (PDI, 1/27/06).

1. "The deficit narrowed because of expenditure cuts rather than rising revenues." This is inaccurate. The deficit narrowed because of both. Some P20.9 billion in savings were made from lower interest payments because of improved investor confidence, lower costs due to cost-cutting schemes and the implementation of the procurement law.

Revenues exceeded the goal by P12.6 billion. While it's true that the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs were below their targets, the Bureau of Treasury more than offset their collection shortfalls. BIR and BOC performance is being improved through medium-term administrative reforms and this cannot be done in a year.

2. "While the government expected to raise P7.5 billion in additional revenues from the sin tax, the actual increase was only P2.09 billion for the whole year."

The revenue projection from the sin tax law is premised on a normal year without judicial encumbrances. The year 2005 was an abnormal year in several respects.

a) Every time excise tax rates are adjusted, collections drop by 25 percent during the next two quarters as manufacturers advance the release of their stocks a quarter before the effectiveness of the new rate.

b) A TRO was issued on sin tax collections in the Subic port, and shipments were directed toward this port.

3. "Besides, cost-cutting seems farthest from the mind of President Macapagal-Arroyo as she continues to fight for political survival."

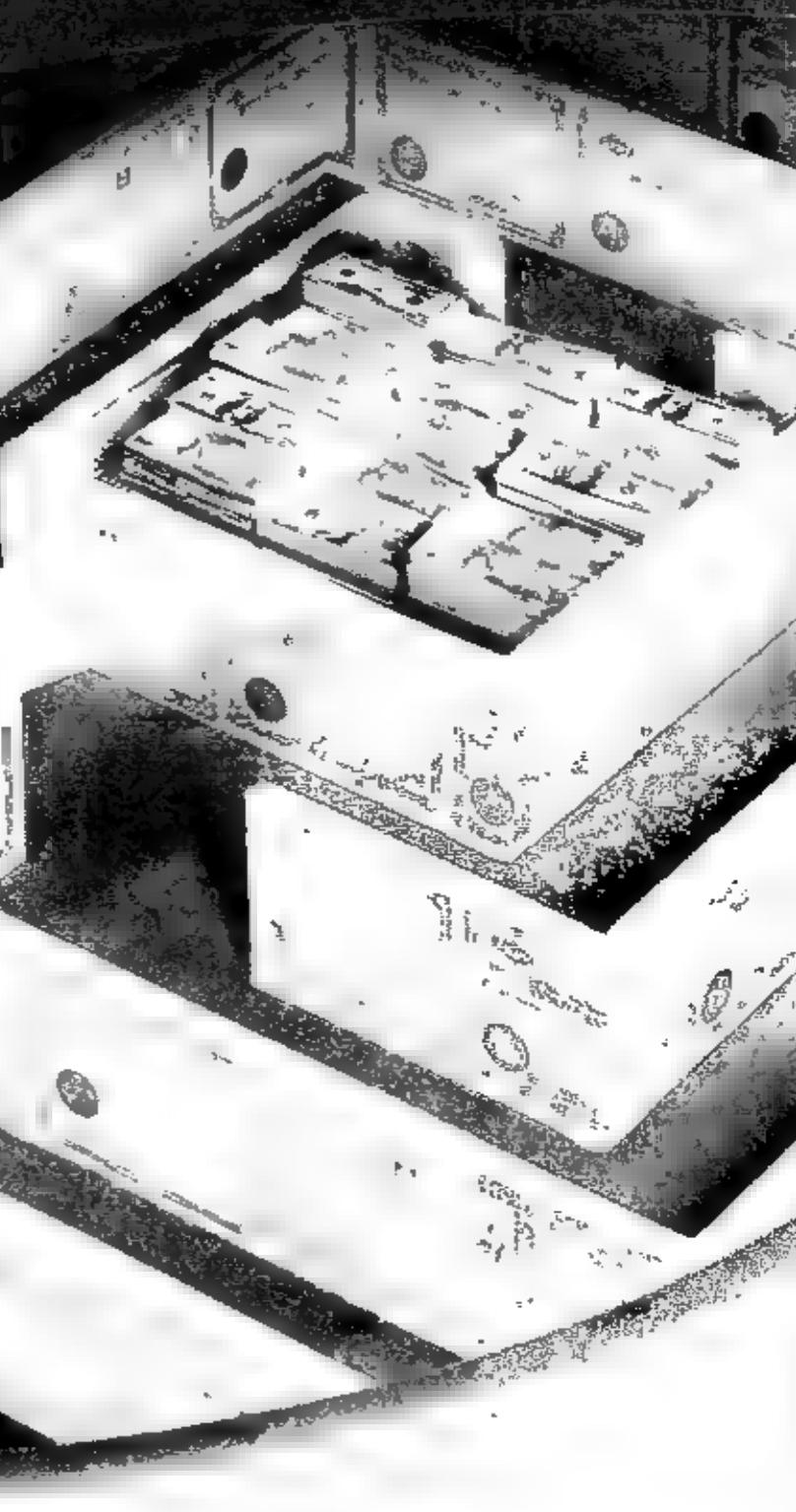
The editorial contradicts itself with this statement as it mentioned in a previous paragraph that "the deficit narrowed because of expenditure cuts." The words "cost-cutting" and "expenditure cuts" should mean the same.

It is unfortunate that in the attempt to turn a positive economic development for the country into negative news, the editorial sacrificed accuracy and consistency, resulting in a skewed analysis of an important development in our economy.

—GIL S. BELTRAN, undersecretary,
Department of Finance

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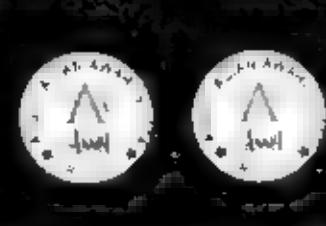
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Gov't loses control of rice supply to traders

PILI, CAMARINES SUR—THE government is losing local rice supply to traders buying at P11 per kilogram, P1 more than the purchase price of the National Food Authority that buys rice for P10 per kilogram, a manager of the grains agency here said.

Edmundo Enrique, NFA Camarines Sur manager, said the non-competitive buying price of the government discouraged farmers to sell their harvest to the grains agency's buying stations.

Enrique said last year alone, the output of the palay procurement program here was very low with a mere 800 bags sold to the government's buying stations while the overwhelming harvest of the province went into the warehouses of traders.

Self-sufficient

He said Camarines Sur is self-sufficient in rice, with an average rice harvest of 200,000 metric tons every year.

He said the government procures palay to build stock that would serve as a buffer that can be disposed of anytime to influence the market price and ensure food security.

Enrique said the government responds to food security programs with its buffer stock of imported rice at the NFA warehouses.

He said that this year, at least 1.8 million metric tons of rice will be imported by the government.

The NFA manager said he is offering the provincial government of Camarines Sur a partnership agreement with the NFA to trade palay which, he said, is a way to respond to the competition.

He said he will ask from the provincial government a counterpart of P1 per kilo of palay sold to NFA's buying station to push the government's buying price at par with the traders.

Incentives

Enrique said the NFA offers as an incentive to the provincial government the rights over the procured palay harvest for six months from the period the rice supply was stored in NFA warehouses.

He said the rice stock remains reserved for the provincial government for six months. The deal would allow the provincial government free use of NFA warehouses for four months and charge the provincial government a minimum 1.5 percent of the stock's value starting in the fifth and sixth months.

Enrique said the provincial government, given the rights over the rice stock, can engage in rice trading with other entities to generate profit.

Authorities had tried to stop the monopoly in rice trading by middlemen and traders to no avail. *Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

1ST BLOOD IN 2006

3 Left activists killed in Bicol, Samar

IROSIN, SORSOGON—THREE more leaders of militant party-list groups Bayan Muna and Anak Paws were killed in separate attacks here and in Camarines Norte and in Borongan, Samar.

The latest victim of political assassination in Bicol was Councilor Maximo Frivaldo, 39, and a member of Bayan Muna, who was shot dead early yesterday.

Another Bayan Muna organizer was shot dead yesterday by three men riding in a black TMX motorcycle without license plate in Barangay Rawis in Borongan, Samar.

Also killed by an assassin was Abner Dalan, municipal coordinator of Anak Paws in Capal-

nga, Camarines Norte.

Dalan, 28, was shot at close range by a lone gunman while on board his motorcycle selling fish in the morning of Jan. 23.

Sources said the suspect took the victim's motorcycle after the shooting. The vehicle has not been recovered until now.

House Deputy Minority Leader and Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo identified the slain Samar Bayan Muna member as a certain Antonio Alde Jr., 25, a Bayan Muna organizer and a casual employee at the Eastern Samar provincial governor's Barangay Affairs Office.

Ocampo said based on initial reports that reached Bayan Muna's national headquarters, a .45 cal. pistol was used in Alde's killing.

Chief Insp. Diony Laceda, Irosin police chief, said Frivaldo was shot by a lone assassin inside his home while attending to his three-month-old son.

Frivaldo's wife, Lanie, said they had just entered the house with their baby when she heard gunshots.

Lanie said that upon hearing the shots, she rushed back to the porch where she left her husband and their baby and saw him bloodied.

Her brother tried to run after the killer but was also fired upon, she said.

Witnesses said the suspect was picked up by a companion in a blue scooter about 200 meters from the site of the shooting.

Frivaldo was the former chair of the Philippine Peasants Institute here, his elder brother Marceo said.

Ocampo said Alde and Frivaldo were the 79th and 80th Bayan Muna members murdered since President Macapagal-Arroyo assumed power in 2001, and the second and third to be killed this year.

Ocampo said Malacafiang should condemn all the political killings and order a manhunt for the perpetrators, be they members of the police or the military.



SATUR OCAMPO

He scored the government's security forces for "considering activists as enemies, and for miserably failing to provide them all with lawful protection due them under the laws and the Constitution."

Bobby Labalan and Delfin Maliari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

ROUNDUP

Man draws death for rape

TUBOD, Lanao del Norte—A 38-year-old father of three was sent to the death row by a regional trial court here for repeatedly raping his daughter. The convict is now awaiting transfer from the town jail to the National Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa, where he will be locked up. The convict, a widower and a native of Cainta, Rizal City, was found guilty two weeks ago of forcing his daughter, now 16, into sex for about two years. Based on court records obtained by the Inquirer last week, the convict impregnated his daughter sometime in 2004. To avoid nosy neighbors, he fled Cainta with his daughter and brought her to Magasayay, a hinterland municipality in the province. The victim told the court that she was only forced by her father to go with him.

Ryan Rosario, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Sagada folk save landmark

SAGADA, Mt. Province—Residents of this tourist town have pooled their resources to save an important historical structure in the town. The St. Theodore's Hospital (STH), which was built by American missionaries, Rev. John Armitage Staunton and his wife Maria, as a clinic in 1904, was almost closed down last year after it suffered financial losses. Residents, however, would not allow the community institution to fade away, and formed a foundation to save it. "Closing the hospital due to the financial crisis was the easiest option but [its] management council decided to work hard to [start a] foundation," Rev. Fr. Morano Tugulay, STH administrative officer, said. He said the Staunton's mission to improve the lives of Sagadans was their inspiration in putting the health of the community at the top of their priorities.

Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Politics confuses LGUs

LINGAYEN, Pangasinan—Local governments are getting confused with the national government's unstable political situation, and this has affected the implementation of development programs, Gov. Victor Agbayani said. "There's too much politics, too little development. How can we take off?" Agbayani told reporters here after he gave the state of the province address at the Urdaneta House. In his address, Agbayani mentioned the dismal situation of the country in 2004. "Impeachment rather than development took center stage and preoccupied the nation. Governance took the back seat to crisis management. Division and debate stalled the economic and development engines of the nation."

Yolanda Sotelo-Fuentes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

'Smoke-free' youth

LEGAZPI CITY—The Smoke-Free Committee of this city, through its members, the Legazpi Adventist Community Services Inc. and the Central Albay Adventist Youth Alive, is conducting a three-day live-in facilitator's training for youth leaders in the community on Jan. 27-29 at the LGU Legazpi Training Center and Dormitory. The training, with the theme "Smoke-Free Legazpi, Youth Alive," is a positive peer prevention program nurturing the wholistic development of youth and adults.

PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Gunrunners' hideout raided

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Members of the provincial mobile group of the Batangas police raided a suspected lair of a syndicate allegedly involved in gunrunning in San Nicolas, Batangas and arrested two persons in possession of six unlicensed firearms early Thursday. Senior Supt. Francisco Dan Montenegro, Batangas police director, identified the arrested suspects as brothers Abelardo and Renato Landicho. Seized from Abelardo's house were various firearms. Montenegro said police raided eight houses, but only that of Abelardo's yielded unlicensed guns. He said the raid was covered by search warrants issued by Lemery, Batangas Regional Trial Court Judge Eutiquio Quirante. Cases have already been filed against the suspects who are now detained at the Batangas police headquarters in Batangas City, Montenegro said.

Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Bus cuts town's power

OAS, Albay—A bus slammed into an electric post at a village here, resulting in a power outage. The bus also hit the fence of the house of *Quiapo* correspondent Michael Julian. Bus driver Felix Lubiano, 53, of Cagiragan, Leyte said his steering wheel accidentally got locked when he tried to evade a barricade on the highway. No one was hurt.

PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

3 towns reclassified

SAN ILDEFONSO, Bulacan—The Bureau of Local Government Finance (BLGF) has reclassified the towns of San Ildefonso, Guiguinto and Balagtas as first class municipalities. The BLGF reclassified these towns after they posted P50 million in tax collections and earnings from 2000 to 2003. San Ildefonso Mayor Edgardo Galvez said the reclassification was due to the intensified tax collection campaign of the local government. He said the bulk of collections came from the more than 300 medium-scale businesses and hog farms in his town.

Carmina Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Cop kills fellow cop

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—A rookie Manila policeman was shot dead by his fellow police officer after a heated, intoxicated argument in Mabitac, Batangas past midnight of Jan. 24. Calabarzon police director Chief Supt. Jesus Verzosa identified the victim as PD1 Joel Cosme, assigned at the National Capital Region office of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency. He said Cosme died from several bullet wounds in the chest and other parts of the body while suspect PD1 Nelson Mariano, assigned at the Holding Center of Camp Crame, underwent treatment in Batangas General Hospital after suffering bullet wounds in the thighs.

Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Water supply interrupted

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—Water supply in certain areas here was temporarily cut to give way to the repair of the distribution line in Barangay Sta. Monica, particularly the one beside the Caramoan Bridge where pipelines are leading. Nicky Villar, Puerto Princesa City Water District supervising internal control officer, said water supply in certain areas was cut starting noon of Jan. 24 and was restored Jan. 26. The repair had to be done, she said, because the leaks were getting worse, even allowing some residents to do their laundry in pools of water that formed from the leaks.

Gerardton Ticlo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau



Logging blamed for 4-day Isabela flooding

ILAGAN, ISABELA—THE TOP official of the Philippine Reclamation Authority blamed illegal logging in Isabela for the four-day flooding that hit more than 100 villages and devastated P452 million worth of rice and corn in the province.

Silvestre Bello III, PRA general manager, said the denudation of parts of the Sierra Madre mountain ranges resulted in floods in low-lying villages of the province.

The provincial board on Friday declared Isabela under a state of calamity following the floods caused by heavy rains brought about by tropical depression Agaton.

Bello, a native of Isabela, said reports reaching him showed that poachers were conniving with some environment officials in pilaging the Sierra Madre's resources.

He asked officials the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to protect the province's environment and stop their unscrupulous personnel from protecting illegal loggers.

But Felix Taguba, DENR Isabela director, said his agency should not be blamed for the floods.

"Why put all the blame on us? This is a multi-sectoral problem."



MEMBERS of the Ilagan municipal rescue and relief operations team load relief goods and other items for distribution to about 400 isolated families in Camunatan, Ilagan, Isabela Jan. 27.

The local government units, government leaders in the province, towns and barangays should also share the burden," he said.

In Nueva Ecija, heavy rains and floods deprived onion growers in San Jose City of their major source of income af-

ter about 1,500 hectares of onion farms, most of which are growing the *tanduyong* (red shallot) variety, were destroyed.

Rogelio Malunay, city agriculturist, estimated the losses at P254.84 million.

"This was the first time that this disaster happened here because of the unusual coming of heavy rains this time of the year," he said.

Malunay said of the 1,850 hectares planted to different varieties of onions in 28 villages in San Jose, only 372 hectares have chances of recovery.

Onion farmers here earn at least P50,000 for a hectare of onion during harvest. The average yield per hectare is 10,000 kilograms.

The buying price of the red shallot variety is between P8 and P10 a kg.

Bongabon Mayor Amenia Gamilla said more than 1,000 hectares growing the yellow and red varieties of onions in their town were destroyed by rains and floods.

Gamilla said losses could reach P112 million. Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau, and Anselmo Roque, PDI Central Luzon Desk

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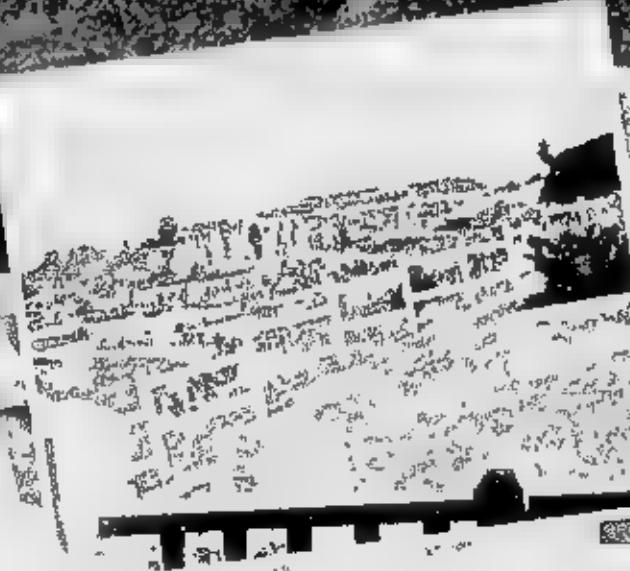
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Talatayod
12-under
champion

PHOTO TALATAYOD HAS
had rumbling beginnings
—practicing tennis
along the railroad tracks!
Talatayod, who bagged
the boys' 12-under division
title following a 6-4,
6-4 win over Calvin Can-
tas in the just-concluded
2006 MILD Junior Tennis
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Workshop, practices at
the Masita hardcourt at
the PNR Espana station.
"Ang problema lang po
natin sa putok pag
nasagasaan ang bola
namin dahil lumipig sa
bakod at meron train na
dumazan," explained Ta-
latayod, 11, who stared
the limelight with Patricia
Ortiza in the girls' 12-
under and Leyan Mon-
cera in the boys' 18-
under class. Due to heavy
rains in the final day of
the MILD netfest sup-
ported by Prince tennis
equipment and Adidas
with Philta sanction, the
organizing CTV Group
had declared co-champions
Mark Escanes and
Vince Salas in the unisex
10-under; Leander
Lazaro and J.L. Ferrer in
the boys' 14-under; El
Santo Santos and Akio
Sy in the boys' 16-under;
Chynna Mamawal and
Sarah Jane Lim in the
girls' 14-under; and
Zhane Quilara and Chris-
tine Patrimonio in the
girls' 16-under events.

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brates its 16th year today
by staging a super 6-
cocker derby where a stag-
gering prize of P4 million
and a brand Toyota Innova
are at stake. "With so
much at stake, the par-
ticipants are definitely
fielding their best game-
birds so aficionados can
expect quality fights
from start to finish," said
host Roligon Lagon. The
first of 127 matches
starts at 2 p.m. Entry fee
is P1,000 to allow
smalltime cockers to
participate. Last year,
Weeve Burgos of Batan-
gas, Teddy Macadagag
of Cavite and Jenc Junio
of Bulacan, ruled the
384-entry Roligon An-
niversary Derby. For in-
quiries, please call 851-
2275, 833-1638 and
852-9812.

PCAP derby set Feb. 6

FIERCE COMPETITION
is anticipated when the
third leg of the Pinoy
Cockers Association of
the Philippines (PCAP) 5-
cocker derby series un-
folds on Feb. 6 at the
Makati Coliseum with B-
Meg Derby Ace as spon-
sor. The combined entry
of Jet Fernando, Jinggo
Brothers, Madlambayan
Brothers and Bobby
Doro-mal (Ulmafer Mag-
ic) emerged as solo
champion in the second
leg last Jan. 23. Mean-
while, another 3-cocker
derby to be hosted by
Capt. Leo Magpantay is
slated at Makati Colise-
um tomorrow. Entry fee
is P4,000. Call 896-3545
and 895-6475.

Fastest win Ulutan set

NO LESS THAN 160 EN-
tries are expected today
when the Fastest Win
One-Cock Ulutan of An-
tipolo Coliseum sizzles at
8 a.m. Coliseum manager
TJ Marquez said regis-
tration fee is P700. The
guaranteed prize of
P150,000 will be dis-
tributed to the winners
regardless of the number
of entries. The fastest win
champion will get
P40,000 while P3,000
and P2,000 awaits the
champion handler and
gaffer. Antipolo Coliseum
re-opened last Dec. 4 un-
der new management
headed by TJ Marquez,
who also handles Texas
Cockpit.

James keys Cavs' 5th win in row

Block, dunk at crunch time spike 44-point effort

NEW YORK—LEBRON
James scored 44 points to
inspire the streaking Cleve-
land Cavaliers to a come-
from-behind 113-106 victo-
ry over the Phoenix Suns
113-106 at the Quicken
Loans Arena on Sunday.

Leading the comeback with 32 points in
the second half, James added 11 rebounds
and seven assists in a brilliant individual
performance that helped the Cavaliers rally
from a 60-51 deficit at the intermission to
win a fifth straight game.

James also added a stunning block in

the fourth quarter that kept the Cavaliers
ahead by two points, then followed that
play with a slam dunk basket that delated
the Suns.

"That play was the key," James told re-
porters after the game.

"I just wanted to make a play and take
the life out of them a little bit."

Sasha Pavlovic added 15 points for the
Cavaliers, while Donyell Marshall added
14 points and seven assists.

Drew Gooden hauled down 10 re-
bounds for the Cavs, who out-rebounded
the Suns 50-31, and won despite allowing
the Suns to shoot 51 percent.

Steve Nash led the Suns offense with 24
points and six assists, while Shawn Marion
had 22 points and seven rebounds.

James Jones chipped in 20 points for the

Suns, who were out-scored 29-19 in the fi-
nal quarter after carrying a three-point lead
into the final 12 minutes.

Cleveland (25-17) had lost six straight
games before the current streak, but still
trailing Detroit by 12 games in the Central Di-
vision as the 36-5 Pistons keep winning.

Phoenix (28-16) lost for the first time in
three games on their six-game road trip, re-
ducing the Suns' West Division lead over
the Los Angeles Clippers to 1 1/2 games.

In Houston, Dwyane Wade scored 32
points while Shaquille O'Neal added 24
points and had 14 rebounds to lead the Mi-
ami Heat to a 101-95 victory over the
Rockets.

Tracy McGrady scored 37 points and
had 12 rebounds while Rafer Alston added
26 points for the Rockets.

In Auburn Hills, Rasheed Wallace scored
24 points as the Detroit Pistons beat the Los
Angeles Lakers 102-93 for their 11th
straight win.

Richard Hamilton added 20 points for
the Pistons, now an NBA best 37-5.

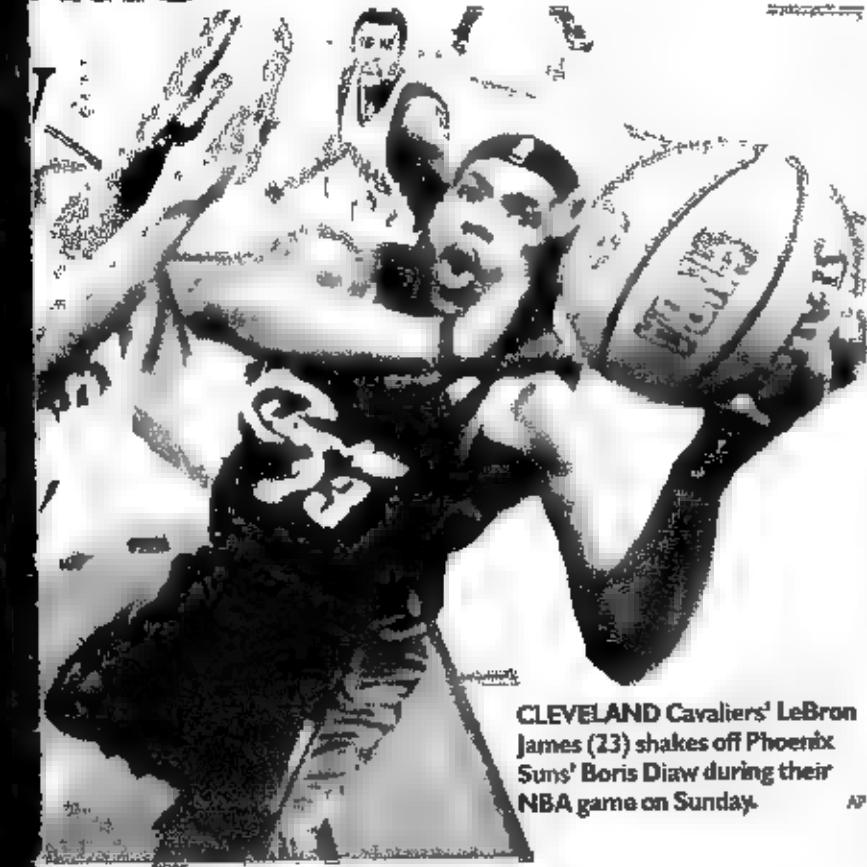
Kobe Bryant scored 39 points and Chris
Mihm added 16 points and had 14 re-
bounds for the Lakers.

In other NBA games played Sunday, the
Toronto Raptors edged the Sacramento
Kings 124-123 in overtime at Toronto, the
Philadelphia 76ers edged the Magic 89-81
at Orlando and the Bucks beat the Boston
Celtics 83-79 in Milwaukee. *Reuters*

SOLAR Sports will air the San
Antonio-Utah game at 10 a.m. with a re-
play at 9 p.m.



Governme
Cigarette smoking is da



CLEVELAND Cavaliers' LeBron James (23) shakes off Phoenix Suns' Boris Diaw during their NBA game on Sunday. AP

TUESDAY, JANUARY 31, 2006

A10

Clijsters eases out Davenport at No. 1

MELBOURNE—AUSTRALIAN OPEN SEMI-FINALIST Kim Clijsters replaced Lindsay Davenport at the top of the Women's Tennis Association (WTA) world rankings on Monday.

Belgian Clijsters returned to the number one position for the first time since 2003, one place above Australian Open champion Amelie Mauresmo with American Davenport slipping to third.

The 26-year-old Frenchwoman rose one spot to second after ending her long wait for a first grand slam title by beating Belgian Justine Henin-Hardenne in the final.

Henin-Hardenne, who pulled out of the final in the second set due to stomach illness, moved up one place to fifth, while last year's Australian Open champion Serena Williams dropped 24 places to 39th after losing in the third round in Melbourne.

Former world number one Martina Hingis of Switzerland climbed 232 places to number 117 after reaching the quarter-finals in her first grand slam event since retiring though injury in 2002.

Reuters

Baghdatis hailed as hero

NICOSIA—CYPRUS HAILED MARCOS BAGHDATIS AS a national hero on Sunday even though his odyssey down under ended in defeat. "He is still a winner for Cyprus. We all love him," said Michalis Petrou, 34. "This is still a great day for Cyprus." The exploits of Baghdatis, from a village named 'fairy-tale,' had seized the imagination of tennis fans worldwide as he roared into the Australian Open final in Melbourne. World number one Roger Federer eventually proved too good for the unseeded Baghdatis in Sunday's final but his defeat did nothing to dampen Cypriot pride.

Reuters



CHAMP: Arturo Gatti of Jersey City, N.J., celebrates his win over Thomas Damgaard of Denmark in their IBF welterweight championship fight at Atlantic City Boardwalk Hall in Atlantic City, N.J. AP

Southern golf tilt for ladies

TEENER MIA PICCIO takes a crack at the Southern Ladies Open crown beginning Feb. 2 at the Del Monte Golf Club in Manolo Fortich, Bulidnon. Piccio, the 13-year-old who finished runner-up to Fil-Aussie Frances Bondad in last year's Philippine Amateurs in Bacolod, hopes to come out strong in the 43rd staging of this annual tournament organized and conducted by the National Golf Association of the Philippines (NGAP). But she will have her hands full against the likes of Lora Roberto, Carmelita Villarman and fellow Bacolod native Anya Tarpinco, all from Southwoods, who are expected to head the chase for the crown in the absence of Bondad and fancied players Jayvie Agojo and Debbie de Villa. Another player to watch is jungolfer Crystal Superal. The three-day event is sponsored by Petron Corp., DHL Worldwide Express/WWW Express, Gopez Corp. and Hans Bruehmann int'l. Jeweler. Contact NGAP at 525-6987 or 524-5180 or email at ngapgolf@hotmail.com or visit www.ngap.net, or Del Monte Golf Club at telephone (088) 855-5976/6101.

Inner Wheel bowlfest on

THE INNER WHEEL Clubs of the Phils. Inc. (IWCP) will hold its 9th Inter-District Bowling Tournament today at the Rockwell Center in Makati City starting at 9 a.m. according to tournament director and past district chair Baby Santos. Assisting Santos are past president Sol Vasquez and Vangie Banzon, Inner Wheel, composed of wives of Rotarians, is holding the event to drum up their forthcoming 40th National Conference set at the Manila Hotel on Feb. 3, and 4. National vice president Vicki Magadia along with National president Raquel Sta. Ines expect more than a thousand participants. International champion bowler Liza del Rosario will roll the ceremonial ball with president Sta. Ines and National Conference chair Magadia.

Edmistone rips record

MELBOURNE, AUS.—Australia's Jade Edmistone broke her own world record in the 50-meter breaststroke Monday, finishing in 30.31 seconds in the heats on the opening day of the Australian championships. Edmistone shaved 0.14 seconds off the record she set in winning the world championships in Montreal last year.

AP

nt Warning:
dangerous to your health.

SPORTS

TUESDAY, JANUARY 31, 2006

A 20

Cash-strapped PSC lays down new policies

By Masong R. Castillo

THE NATIONAL SPORTS ASSOCIATIONS WERE briefed yesterday about new policies of the Philippine Sports Commission in the face of the agency's slashed budget and the country's preparations for the Asian Games in December.

Foremost in the agenda during the meeting between PSC chair William "Butch" Ramirez and the NSA heads and their representatives was the liquidation of cash advances made for the training of athletes for the recent Southeast Asian Games.

PSC, health officials meet on EO 441

By Marc Anthony Reyes

OFFICIALS OF THE PHILIPPINE SPORTS COMMISSION and the Department of Health will meet today to discuss the salient aspects of Executive Order 441 which delegates major functions of the sports agency to the DOH.

"We hope to finally resolve the issues because the PSC can't just relinquish its policy-making chores to the DOH," said PSC executive director Guillermo Iroy. "Instead of promotion (for helping win the overall title in the 23rd Southeast Asian Games), it's as if we have been demoted."

Though EO 441 only gives the health department full power over the health and fitness of the national athletes—one of the major tasks of the PSC—Iroy explained that there is a danger the EO will put the PSC entirely under the DOH.

Iroy noted that the DOH has already created a monitoring group made up of DOH regional directors which will review the PSC policies.

He said the DOH should concentrate its "oversight committee powers" on the more than 1,000 national athletes and nothing more.

He added that the DOH has been communicating with them about its initial moves in line with the implementation of the EO that was signed by President Macapagal-Arroyo last July 27.

The EO has already caused an uproar from the national sports associations, which relies on the PSC for funds to support their programs.

22nd Mango Tee fires off today

MORE THAN 600 ENTRIES WILL COMPETE starting today in the 22nd Mango Tee of the Alabang Country Club.

Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corporation and Smart Communications are the co-presenters of one of the most popular member-guest tournaments in the land.

The five-day event, which also boasts of a large number of hole and major sponsors, officially started with the ceremonial tee-off yesterday with former President Fidel V. Ramos as guest.

A sponsors night was also held in the evening which also served as a welcome party for the participants.

Mitsubishi Motors and Citimotors Inc. have signed up to provide the tournament's hole-in-one prizes. Aside from the wide array of giveaways and raffle prizes, acemakers have a chance to drive home the latest Mitsubishi vehicles.

The major sponsors are Pascort Philippines, Pacific Sports Network/Taylormade Adidas, Landco Pacific Corporation, Golforce, Inc., Makati Skyline, Philippine Airlines, Srixon Golf and Sharp Philippines.

Race 1—(Or/Tr)—Spanish Drums (5), Fast and Furious (1), Part and Pretty (3), Zeta (2)—Richie Rich (9), Special Science (2), Both Shell (5), Sir Olson (10), Pusao II (1) Race 2—(Or/Tr)—Vhenges (1), Master Cool (5), Silver Dollar (2), Shady (3) Race 3—(Or/Tr)—Guided Missile (3), Road Runner (1), Red Phoenix/Al Canta (8), Fancy Dancer (7), Lopiano (9) Race 4—(Or/Tr)—Lady in Gold (4), Gentleman's Lady (7), Star's Angel (5), Most Ticket (2) Race 5—(Or/Tr)—Beautiful Mind (2), Tellmances (6), Please Don't Stop (1), Crafty Treasure (8)

BY TOP CHOICE Race 7—Super 8/Tr—Virgin Island (3), Strong Lady (4), Terminator (2), Southern Prince (8), Old Reliable (6), Coherence (1) Race 8—(Or/Tr)—Golden Brook (5), Play It Again (1), Special Lady (2), Epiphany (3), Valenti Queen (4) Race 9—(Or/Tr)—Sister Bernard (11), Once And For All (3), Shuster (4), Scarlet Beauty (5), Western Dancer (6), Magical Sud (1)



ARWIND Santos of Magnolia jams one in for Magnolia in the semifinals against Granny Goose.

PBL Heroes Cup clash too tough to call

By Jasmine W. Payo

HOW DO YOU STOP A TEAM STACKED WITH TALENT?

That's the dilemma both Rain or Shine and Magnolia Ice Cream will face when they dispute the PBL Heroes Cup crown on Thursday.

Both squads boast four players solidly in the hunt for the Most Valuable Player award.

Jojo Tangkay, the MVP frontrunner with a league-best (16.45 ppg), has been making things happen for the Elasto Painters, along with block-shot leader Jay-R Reyes (2.1 bpg).

Arwind Santos and Kelly Williams, meanwhile, have been piling up double-double performances for the Wizards.

Yet the threat doesn't stop with the teams' star duos. The Painters and the Wizards are also banking on experience and depth on all fronts.

While the Painters have veterans Eugene Tan, Gilbert Malabanan and Marvin Ortega to pro-

vide consistent play, the Wizards too have Klim Venezuela and Jeff Chan to turn to at crunch time.

Moreover, there's no lack of young guns ready to step up for the two finalists.

When an injury sidelined Tangkay in the Painters' last semifinal match versus Granny Goose, the Painters' collegiate standouts provided the numbers through Junjun Cabatu of La Salle, Ronjay Enrile of Letran, Erwin Sta. Maria of Mapua and Jay Sagad of St. Benilde.

But the Wizards also have the core roster of the Far Eastern U Tamaraws, the 2005 UAAP champions, led by Santos, RJ Rizada and Mark Isp.

Both marched on to the championship round after posting semifinal sweeps.

The Painters slipped past Harbour Centre, 69-67, in Game 1, then wrapped up the series with a 69-59 Game 2 victory.

The Wizards edged Granny Goose in the opener with a 98-97 double overtime triumph, then won, 92-86, in another double-overtime win.

Que earns P715,000 in Qatar golf

DOHA—ANGELO QUE CLOSED OUT WITH A 73 for an even par 288 total that earned him \$13,600 in the Commercialbank Qatar Masters won by Sweden's Henrik Stenson by three strokes Sunday.

Que, winner of the Asian Tour's 2004 Vietnam leg, finished in a six-way tie for 37th place after earlier rounds of 71-72-72. He vaulted to 17th in the money list with total earnings of \$14,540.

Frankie Minosa, the only Filipino player in the

field, missed the cut with rounds of 74-74. He is 23rd in the money rankings with \$8,280.

Stenson overcame swirling winds at the Doha Golf Club to shoot a four-under-par 68 and beat playing partner Paul Broadhurst of England, who signed off with a 70, in the \$2 million event co-sanctioned by the Asian Tour and European Tour.

In claiming a third European victory with a 15-under-par 273 aggregate, Stenson laid the ghost of 2005 to rest. Ten months ago, he was pipped at

the post by Ernie Els, who finished tied for 13th this time, a massive 10 shots back, after a 72.

Asia's best performer was Thailand's Thammanoon Siriroj, who claimed a share of 15th place at 284 after a 73. World No. 2 Vijay Singh wrapped up his week with a 69 for 24th, tied with among others, Asian No. 1 Thaworn Wiratchant of Thailand (73), compatriot Thongchai Jaidee (74) and India's Jeev Milkha Singh (73).

Stenson won \$333,330. Asian Tour News.



QUE: Ties for 37th

Just a thought: What if Pacquiao retires?

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

par 3, 16th—also after a missed green.

Tiger Woods was in regulation both times.

To others, they win some, they lose some. To Tiger Woods, he wins mostly all the time.

But while Tiger Woods stashed away the top prize, Olazabal's share of the runner-up purse wasn't as bad since it ran into hundreds of thousands of dollars, too. Same with Green, who made his second Top 5 finish in only two PGA tournaments as a rookie.

Indeed, the beauty of golf is, you are enjoying it and at the same time winning the big bucks.

Not so in boxing.

Manny Pacquiao has to go through Calvary after Calvary to earn his millions.

Although he knocked Erik Morales out in the 10th, Pacquiao would be a hypocrite if he says he wasn't hurt by Morales' own shots to his face.

Sure he was hurt, too, sure he suffered, too, since Morales is also known as one of the hardest punchers in the game. Only 14 of his 48 previous victims went the distance.

If Pacquiao would say otherwise, he'd be lying the way Morales lied when the Mexican said he wasn't hurt the first time they met and won a 12-round decision.

In 46 fights, Pacquiao has had his own dose of his own head. He'd had 22 punch-laden rounds against Morales. Surely, he's had his own share of shots thrown his way.

That's why I pray Pacquiao won't go the way of Muhammad Ali, who also banked quite a fortune as a world heavyweight boxing champion, but would pitifully be reduced into a virtual vegetable after contracting Parkinson's, the disease that mostly afflicts boxers due to constant head bombardment atop the ring—not to include sparring sessions.

Boxers absorb the most head hits than

any person on Earth. Doctors say the brain gets shaken with each shot inflicted on the head, face. Parkinson's is that debilitating disease that slows down the motor of our brain. Thus, Ali, 67, now moves in slow motion, his speech as slurred as one undergoing speech therapy after a stroke.

I don't know if this would be correct but I'll say it just the same: What if Pacquiao retires now?

To begin with, he's got a lot of money now. Look, if the computations are right—he earned no less than P300 million in his Jan. 22 fight against Morales—what is there to fight for?

Give me P4 million and I'll go home to Mangatrem, buy me a hectare of rice field, de-weed my catturays and mauling-gays in the morning, nurse a cold bear in the gathering shadows while I listen to the birds by the swaying cogon and murmuring brooks.

Ah, but some people would just not stop, couldn't stop, refuse to stop.

Just like grandmasters, only weavers of words know when to resign.

Comments to menu@pidtdsl.net

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ADVANCE



WALTER Pazon (in red Honda hatchback, left) rallies to beat Sheldon Chua to snatch the Quick 8 title at the BRC.

Blanche bets rule 3rd leg of drag racing

ROSARIO, BATANGAS—WALTER PAZON

and Leo Joel Cordero ruled their respective classes for Blanche Racing recently in the third leg of the 2005 Red Horse-PCSO National Drag Racing Championship Series at the BRC Drag Strip here.

The 27-year-old Pazon clocked 12.289 seconds in his Honda Hatchback to top the Quick 8 division over teammate Sheldon Chua (12.890).

Cordero, in another Honda, won the Pro class with a time of 13.279, also denying Chua the title.

The expected duel between Blanche Racing and Group N-Matadorics did not materialize after Group N top driver Sonny de Torres damaged his clutch.

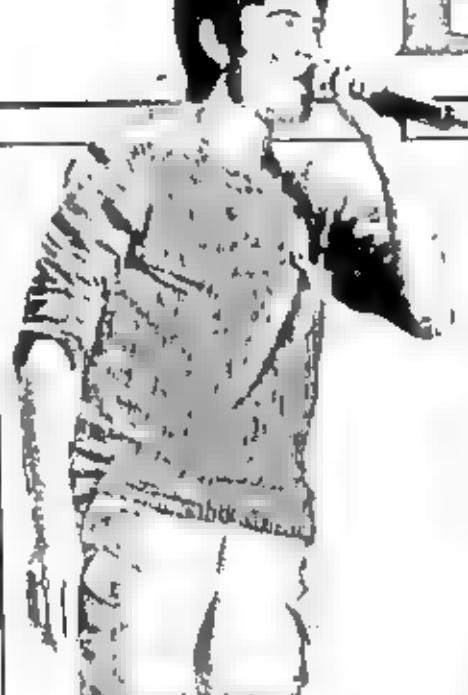
"We're looking forward to making it third in a row, and we even bought this new clutch worth P30,000," said De Tor-

res, who is also backed by Jack Daniels. No one, though, surpassed De Torres' record time of 11.912 seconds.

Sixty drivers competed in the event held in cooperation with the Automobil Association of the Philippines and sponsored by Red Horse, PCSO, Petron and Sparco and supported by Pilipinas Shell, Denso Spark Plugs, Casino Filipino, G9 99.1FM and DaBest 98.5 FM.

ENTERTAINMENT

Text us your feedback: Inquirer net name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)



Christian again visits Indonesia, where he's a star

CHRISTIAN BAUTISTA IS OFF TODAY for a week long visit to Indonesia, where he is a big star

Indonesia's largest TV station, RCTI, in cooperation with Warner Music Indonesia, is producing a big TV special starring Christian and top local composer/musical director and conductor Andi Ruyanto. Christian will be backed up by a 40-piece orchestra.

This is the first time that a Filipino performer will have his own TV special in said country.

Christian will also conduct a radio promo tour for Prambors radio station and shoot two music videos. Print publications Kompas, Femina, Gadjah Nova and Jakarta Post have scheduled interviews with the Filipino singer. He is also scheduled for guestings in several MTV Indonesia shows.

Exceptional H'wood films coming up

THIS IS A GOOD TIME TO WATCH MOVIES. Topping our list of should-sees is "Proof," starring Gwyneth Paltrow as an enigmatic young woman who grew up following in the footsteps of her brilliant but unstable father, a mathematical genius (Anthony Hopkins).

On the eve of her 27th birthday, her world turned upside down by the arrival of her estranged sister (Claire Danes), and the attentions of her father's former student (Jake Gyllenhaal).

"Proof," which is based on David Auburn's award-winning play, makes for compelling viewing because it tells the psychologically complex story of a woman haunted by her father's past and the shadow cast over her own future.

It explores the link between genius and madness, father-daughter relationships, and the nature of truth and family.

A couple of years ago, the play was staged in Manila, with Lea Salonga solidly portraying its female lead character. That was an unsatisfying viewing experience, so we're looking forward to watching John Madden's film when it opens in town next month, to finally appreciate what the provocative psychological drama is really about.

For its part, "Walk the Line," the film on the youthful years of Johnny Cash and June Carter, has acquired greater cache after stars Joaquin Phoenix and Reese Witherspoon copied top acting honors at the recent Golden Globe awards for their exceptional portrayals.

The story begins in Depression-era Arkansas, moves through Cash's wild tour with rock pioneers like Elvis Presley and Jerry Lee Lewis, and culminates in his unforgettable 1968 concert at Folsom Prison.

Also eminently viewable is "Syriana," a political thriller starring George Clooney as an embattled CIA agent and Matt Damon as a family man caught up in a political conspiracy.

Directed by Stephen Gaghan ("Traffic") and inspired by "See No Evil," the book written by CIA operative Robert Baer, "Syriana" has multiple storylines that unfold against the intrigue and corruption of the global oil industry.

EXCEPTIONAL/A3-4

Classics on cable

'Badjao' makes debut on Cinema One

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

"IT WAS SHOT IN SUBIC," RECALLED ROSA Rosal, lead actress of the D/N classic, "Badjao." "Director Lamberto Avellana floated vintas and built houses on stilts in Zambales to make it look like Mindanao."

"Badjao" went on to sweep the 1957 Southeast Asia Film Festival held in Tokyo, winning Best Director, Story, Editing and Cinematography.

"How I wish today's filmmakers would make more movies like 'Badjao' and 'Biyaya ng Lupa'."

CLASSICS/A3-2

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"How I wish today's filmmakers would make more movies like 'Badjao' and 'Biyaya ng Lupa'."

CLASSICS/A3-2

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<type> <type> LOCATION>	
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etc; LUKA4 EMERGENCY FIRE, MAKATI	

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ENTERTAINMENT

Classics on cable

From page A2-1



MINDANAO in "Badjao," starring Tony Santos Sr. and Rosa Rosal, was actually Subic in Zambales.

which showcased Filipino culture," Rosal told *Entertainment* in an interview last year. "We need to make younger generations aware of our rich and proud heritage."

Hopefully, Rosal will get her wish to reach a wider, more youthful audience when "Badjao" makes its cable premiere on Cinema One, on Feb. 19 at 8 p.m., on the channel's "Sunday Cine Premieres" slot.

"Badjao" is only the third vintage film to debut on the channel, following another Rosal-starrer, "Biyaya ng Lupa," which was premiered last November, and the Charito Solis tearjerker "Malvarosa" this month.

IVN formally turned over 102 of its titles—including other cinematic gems "Anak Dalita," "Kundiman ng Lah" and "Bong Adarna"—to Cinema One in November 2005.

Since the IVN collection is now stored in the state-of-the-art ABS-CBN Archives, the network will have "cable and online rights" to these classics for the next 25 years.

Echoing Rosal's sen-

timents, Cinema One also expressed the hope that the cable airing of "Badjao" would "attract mature viewers and reintroduce the film to a younger demographic."

Also starring in "Badjao" are acting luminaries Tony Santos Sr., Vic Silyan, Leroy Salvador and Joseph de Cordova.

Rosal couldn't help waxing nostalgic every time "Badjao" was mentioned. "My producer Manny de Leon didn't want to give me the role because it was unglamorous," she recounted.

The fair-skinned Filipino-Egyptian-French mestiza wasn't right for the part, the producer explained.

"So I put on dark makeup to look convincing as a Tausug," Rosal said.

Moreover, she had a child birth scene in the

"Even if I was still single then," she added, laughing. "Dahang dalaga ako noon!"

M M T A

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MOVIE GUIDE

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2:00PM UNDERWORLD / FUN WITH

RUMORS

3:00PM CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2

4:00PM HALF LIGHT

5:00PM PREMIERE

6:00PM ZODIAC SISTERS / NARNIA

7:00PM

8:00PM

9:00PM

10:00PM



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1:00PM UNDERWORLD-2

2:00PM

3:00PM RUMOR HAS IT

4:00PM ZATHURA

5:00PM THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA

6:00PM ZATHURA

7:00PM CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN-2

8:00PM DON'T GIVE UP ON US

9:00PM HALF LIGHT

10:00PM THE NARNIA



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2:00PM CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN

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4:00PM HALF LIGHT

5:00PM

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movietime
CENTER Stage
BIG MOVIES • BIG SHOWS • BIG EVENTS

SA LAHAT NG GUSTONG SUMIKAT
SA LAHAT NG GUSTONG YUMAMAN
SA LAHAT NG GUSTONG MAGING



movietime
EXCLUSIVE
Catch the funniest award-winning digital film at SM Cinema!
Follow the misadventures of two small-time criminals as they try to move into the big time.
Best Screenplay
Best Sound Design & Score
Cinemalaya Phil. Independent Film Fest.

Directed by Mario Cornejo
Written by Mario Cornejo and Monstar Jimenez
Produced by Monstar Jimenez • An Arkofilma Productions

Big Fat Liar

IM 93.8 OFFICIAL MEDIA PARTNERS:

movietime
BEDAZZLED PREMIERE



CENTER Stage



SCHEDULE AND EVENTS



BAMBOO
LIVE IN CONCERT
FEBRUARY 24, 2006
FRIDAY 8:30 PM
SM MEGAMALL CINEMA 3

THE APO EXPERIENCE
FEBRUARY 25, 2006
SATURDAY 8:30 PM
SM MEGAMALL CINEMA 3

"THE BATTLE" MEMORABILIA
Available at SM Cinema Snackbars! Grab them NOW!

The Battle
T-shirt P250.00

Pacquiao
vs
Barrera
DVD P199.00

Manny
Pacquiao
CD P199.00

GUARANTEED SEATS

THE PODIUM (02) 823-8976
ZATHURA
01-09/02-23/04-38/04-48
08-25/05-06/07/08-10/09/10/09/11/09/12/09/13/09/14/09/15/09/16/09/17/09/18/09/19/09/20/09/21/09/22/09/23/09/24/09/25/09/26/09/27/09/28/09/29/09/30/09/31/09/32/09/33/09/34/09/35/09/36/09/37/09/38/09/39/09/40/09/41/09/42/09/43/09/44/09/45/09/46/09/47/09/48/09/49/09/50/09/51/09/52/09/53/09/54/09/55/09/56/09/57/09/58/09/59/09/60/09/61/09/62/09/63/09/64/09/65/09/66/09/67/09/68/09/69/09/70/09/71/09/72/09/73/09/74/09/75/09/76/09/77/09/78/09/79/09/80/09/81/09/82/09/83/09/84/09/85/09/86/09/87/09/88/09/89/09/90/09/91/09/92/09/93/09/94/09/95/09/96/09/97/09/98/09/99/09/100/09/101/09/102/09/103/09/104/09/105/09/106/09/107/09/108/09/109/09/110/09/111/09/112/09/113/09/114/09/115/09/116/09/117/09/118/09/119/09/120/09/121/09/122/09/123/09/124/09/125/09/126/09/127/09/128/09/129/09/130/09/131/09/132/09/133/09/134/09/135/09/136/09/137/09/138/09/139/09/140/09/141/09/142/09/143/09/144/09/145/09/146/09/147/09/148/09/149/09/150/09/151/09/152/09/153/09/154/09/155/09/156/09/157/09/158/09/159/09/160/09/161/09/162/09/163/09/164/09/165/09/166/09/167/09/168/09/169/09/170/09/171/09/172/09/173/09/174/09/175/09/176/09/177/09/178/09/179/09/180/09/181/09/182/09/183/09/184/09/185/09/186/09/187/09/188/09/189/09/190/09/191/09/192/09/193/09/194/09/195/09/196/09/197/09/198/09/199/09/200/09/201/09/202/09/203/09/204/09/205/09/206/09/207/09/208/09/209/09/210/09/211/09/212/09/213/09/214/09/215/09/216/09/217/09/218/09/219/09/220/09/221/09/222/09/223/09/224/09/225/09/226/09/227/09/228/09/229/09/230/09/231/09/232/09/233/09/234/09/235/09/236/09/237/09/238/09/239/09/240/09/241/09/242/09/243/09/244/09/245/09/246/09/247/09/248/09/249/09/250/09/251/09/252/09/253/09/254/09/255/09/256/09/257/09/258/09/259/09/260/09/261/09/262/09/263/09/264/09/265/09/266/09/267/09/268/09/269/09/270/09/271/09/272/09/273/09/274/09/275/09/276/09/277/09/278/09/279/09/280/09/281/09/282/09/283/09/284/09/285/09/286/09/287/09/288/09/289/09/290/09/291/09/292/09/293/09/294/09/295/09/296/09/297/09/298/09/299/09/300/09/301/09/302/09/303/09/304/09/305/09/306/09/307/09/308/09/309/09/310/09/311/09/312/09/313/09/314/09/315/09/316/09/317/09/318/09/319/09/320/09/321/09/322/09/323/09/324/09/325/09/326/09/327/09/328/09/329/09/330/09/331/09/332/09/333/09/334/09/335/09/336/09/337/09/338/09/339/09/340/09/341/09/342/09/343/09/344/09/345/09/346/09/347/09/348/09/349/09/350/09/351/09/352/09/353/09/354/09/355/09/356/09/357/09/358/09/359/09/360/09/361/09/362/09/363/09/364/09/365/09/366/09/367/09/368/09/369/09/370/09/371/09/372/09/373/09/374/09/375/09/376/09/377/09/378/09/379/09/380/09/381/09/382/09/383/09/384/09/385/09/386/09/387/09/388/09/389/09/390/09/391/09/392/09/393/09/394/09/395/09/396/09/397/09/398/09/399/09/400/09/401/09/402/09/403/09/404/09/405/09/406/09/407/09/408/09/409/09/410/09/411/09/412/09/413/09/414/09/415/09/416/09/417/09/418/09/419/09/420/09/421/09/422/09/423/09/424/09/425/09/426/09/427/09/428/09/429/09/430/09/431/09/432/09/433/09/434/09/435/09/436/09/437/09/438/09/439/09/440/09/441/09/442/09/443/09/444/09/445/09/446/09/447/09/448/09/449/09/450/09/451/09/452/09/453/09/454/09/455/09/456/09/457/09/458/09/459/09/460/09/461/09/462/09/463/09/464/09/465/09/466/09/467/09/468/09/469/09/470/09/471/09/472/09/473/09/474/09/475/09/476/09/477/09/478/09/479/09/480/09/481/09/482/09/483/09/484/09/485/09/486/09/487/09/488/09/489/09/490/09/491/09/492/09/493/09/494/09/495/09/496/09/497/09/498/09/499/09/500/09/501/09/502/09/503/09/504/09/505/09/506/09/507/09/508/09/509/09/510/09/511/09/512/09/513/09/514/09/515/09/516/09/517/09/518/09/519/09/520/09/521/09/522/09/523/09/524/09/525/09/526/09/527/09/528/09/529/09/530/09/531/09/532/09/533/09/534/09/535/09/536/09/537/09/538/09/539/09/540/09/541/09/542/09/543/09/544/09/545/09/546/09/547/09/548/09/549/09/550/09/551/09/552/09/553/09/554/09/555/09/556/09/557/09/558/09/559/09/560/09/561/09/562/09/563/09/564/09/565/09/566/09/567/09/568/09/569/09/570/09/571/09/572/09/573/09/574/09/575/09/576/09/577/09/578/09/579/09/580/09/581/09/582/09/583/09/584/09/585/09/586/09/587/09/588/09/589/09/590/09/591/09/592/09/593/09/594/09/595/09/596/09/597/09/598/09/599/09/600/09/601/09/602/09/603/09/604/09/605/09/606/09/607/09/608/09/609/09/610/09/611/09/612/09/613/09/614/09/615/09/616/09/617/09/618/09/619/09/620/09/621/09/622/09/623/09/624/09/625/09/626/09/627/09/628/09/629/09/630/09/631/09/632/09/633/09/634/09/635/09/636/09/637/09/638/09/639/09/640/09/641/09/642/09/643/09/644/09/645/09/646/09/647/09/648/09/649/09/650/09/651/09/652/09/653/09/654/09/655/09/656/09/657/09/658/09/659/09/660/09/661/09/662/09/663/09/664/09/665/09/666/09/667/09/668/09/669/09/670/09/671/09/672/09/673/09/674/09/675/09/676/09/677/09/678/09/679/09/680/09/681/09/682/09/683/09/684/09/685/09/686/09/687/09/688/09/689/09/690/09/691/09/692/09/693/09/694/09/695/09/696/09/697/09/698/09/699/09/700/09/701/09/702/09/703/09/704/09/705/09/706/09/707/09/708/09/709/09/710/09/711/09/712/09/713/09/714/09/715/09/716/09/717/09/718/09/719/09/720/09/721/09/722/09/723/09/724/09/725/09/726/09/727/09/728/09/729/09/730/09/731/09/732/09/733/0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FOXTROT



BY BILL AMEND

BY JESS ABRERA

MARVIN



BY TOM ARMSTRONG

BABY BLUES



BY JERRY SCOTT

PUGAD BABOY



BY P.M. JUNIOR

MUTTS



BY PATRICK McDONNELL

ATOMO AND WEBOY



BY LYRA GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY



BY STEVEN PABALINAS

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You like to perform. You're naturally entertaining, and you feel you have something to communicate. You also enjoy being appreciated. However, you want to make your mark on the world, and you want to be taken seriously. (After all, you're more than just a pretty face.) Work hard in the year ahead because rewards are soon to follow.

Birthdate of: Justin Timberlake, singer; Mommie Driver, actress; Carol Channing, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This is a good day to lie low. Steal some quiet moments of solitude for yourself if you can. At best, work alone. (You might be involved in service on behalf of others.)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): This is a good day to talk to parents, bosses and important people. Be aware that you are noticed more than usual today. Something might occur that calls attention to you.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): This is a good day to take care of details about shared property, debt, taxes and insurance matters. Expect to feel emotionally intense about anything that you're involved with today.

Taurus (April 20 to May 20): This is a social day with friends and groups. Conversations with a female friend in particular could be significant or important to you. Could this be a new love?

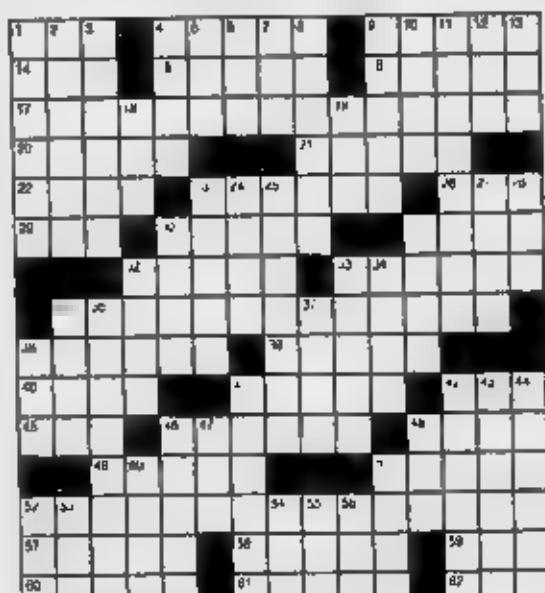
CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Try to break from your routine today. Do something different. Go somewhere you've never been before. You're hungry for adventure; you're also hungry to learn something new.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): With today's Moon opposite your sign, you are both energized and emotional. Conversations with partners might require more patience, tact and diplomacy.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS

1 Actress Hagen
4 Bill addition
9 Play backer
14 Squealer
15 Accusation
16 Bebe Bailey's boss
17 Determined approach
20 Tip off
21 Reserves in advance
22 of the above
23 Underlying
26 Value
29 Time period
30 Love of golf
31 Withered
32 Saying
33 Laudanum, e.g.
35 Pragmatic approach
38 Less fatty
39 Seaside golf course
40 Jug handles
41 Hall-of-Famer Stengel
42 Abe's boy
45 Glory
46 Corporate consolidation
48 Manage to deal with
49 Woman's wrap
51 Subject matter
52 Haphazard approach
57 Put another match to
58 Founder of Bolsheviks
59 Hotshot
60 Hauls off and whacks
61 Banishment treatment
62 Gaffer's gadget

By Diane C. Baldwin
Columbia, MD

Monday's Puzzle Solved

8	Hispanic leaders	9	MITS	DIST	SHIP
10	English track	10	BOAT	UR	BAR
11	Squealer in London	11	PAUL REVERE	ROME	
12	Large-billed Finch	12	AIKEN	COMBIS	
13	Psyche division	13	PETER HABBIT	JONES CO	
14	Albanian cash	14	TOAD	MOTTO	
15	Hilfer's opposite	15	PRINCERA	NIEH	
16	More lenient	16	LAODIS	CRAW	
17	Tel-Jaffa	17	ISRAEL	JAKOTA	
18	Delay	18	POOR RICHARD	SEX	
19	Linker and Garfinkel	19	ENIOS	OREAV	
20	Worl with whiz	20	COLE	YIPPROTH	
21	Prom partner	21	AMEN	JOSE	TERRA
22	Gentlemen	22	CADS	SETS	SWEET
23	Supplies personnel to	23	Dog's master	Nincompoop	
24	Slow-moving	24	Judicial decision	Vocal inflection	
25	Lash mark	25	Castile	Spherical object	
26	Forcible advertising	26	47 Ron who played Tarzan	Hillary Clinton	
27	Loom up	27	48 Infirmary	Rodham	
28	August sign	28	49 Critic Reed	Black cuckoo	
29	Like jambalaya	29	50 Nothing	51	
30	Be mistaken	30	52		

43 For each
44 Judicial decision
45 Castle
46 Advertising
47 Ron who played Tarzan
48 Infirmary
49 Critic Reed
50 Nothing

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): This is a good day to take care of little nitty-gritty details so that you feel more organized both at work and at home. Tidy up things and reduce the clutter.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You're playful. Enjoy flirtations or pleasant activities with children today. The arts are also appealing. Watch professional sports, or participate if possible.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You can make good headway at home and with domestic activities today. Family discussions might also take place. Dealings with a parent can go well today. Family members feel generous toward each other.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You feel optimistic about your future. Perhaps a conversation with siblings or relatives encourages you in some way. This is a lovely day to schmooze with others.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): This is a good day for business and commerce. It's also a great day for shopping. Whatever you get will either please you or be a good value.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): The Moon is in your sign today. Furthermore, it makes lovely aspects to other planets. This is an easygoing, pleasant day for you. Enjoy all contacts with others.

BEN



BY DAN EL SHELTON

KIKO MACHINE



BY MANIX ABRERA

LOVEKNOTS



BY ELIZABETH CH. ONGLO

TULDOK



BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING



AYALA MALLS
LoveMall!



IN 2006
GLORIETTA 4 CINEMA LOBBY

Get the Dino Daze Launch! Uncover facts about
Dinosaurs while taking a break at the hottest
Dino Daze game. Plus, get a chance
to take home lots of dino stuff!



At the Activity Center

GLORIETTA

ALABANG
TOWN
CENTER

AYALA CENTER
CEBU

2nd Philippine Dive Trade Show
January 26 to 28, 2006

Meet & Greet Bob The Builder
January 29, 2006

Shulog 2006 Exhibit
January 6 to 26, 2006 - Pasos

AYALA 1
GREENBELT

Jazz Festival

January 23, 2006

AYALA 2
GREENBELT

ONSTAGE - The perfect spot for concerts,
stage plays & corporate events.
is now accepting bookings for May & July 2006.
For bookings, pls. call 752-7842

Ayala MUSEUM

Registration for Art Workshops now on-going at
Ayala Museum
For inquiries, please call 757-7117 loc 20.
Online registration at www.ayalamuseum.org



AYALA CINEMAS



Reserve your seats by textling SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart)
or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.

Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For information call 729 7777

G1	1	HALF LIGHT	2	THE MAID	3	UNDERWORLD: EVOLUTION	4	DON'T GIVE UP ON US
G4	1	ZATHURA	2	HALF LIGHT	3	UNDERWORLD: EVOLUTION GUARANTEED SEATS	4	DON'T GIVE UP ON US
GB1	4	RUMOR HAS IT	5	THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA	6	CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2	7	THE MAID
GB3	1	ZATHURA	2	CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2	3	ZATHURA GUARANTEED SEATS	4	CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
ATC	1	ZATHURA	2	CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2	3	RUMOR HAS IT GUARANTEED SEATS	4	HALF LIGHT
ACC	1	ZATHURA	2	UNDERWORLD: EVOLUTION	3	THE FAMILY STONE	4	RUMOR HAS IT



Be among the first to watch
at regular admission prices
SPECIAL SNEAK PREVIEW
Alabang Town Center
Glorietta 1
Glorietta 4
Greenbelt 3
Market! Market!

TODAY
JAN. 30 (Mon.) & 31 (Tue.)

MTRCB Rating: PG-13

Regular runs begin February 8
at Ayala Cinemas

0817 6095500
Glorietta - 752 7272; from 10am to 8pm
Greenbelt - 757 4853, from 11am to 12mn

842 2782; from 10am to 8pm
(032) 231 5342 loc 324

Alabang Town Center -
Ayala Center Cebu

Customer Service text hotline:
Customer Service fax hotline:

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Greenbelt - 757 4853, from 11am to 12mn

842 2782; from 10am to 8pm
(032) 231 5342 loc 324

Alabang Town Center -
Ayala Center Cebu

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(032) 2

Sony Ericsson launches new products in Las Vegas show

SONY ERICSSON HAS STARTED THE year with a big bang for mobile music lovers. The company introduced the latest of its Walkman phones, the Sony Ericsson W810, plus two Walkman-branded music accessories in the Las Vegas Consumer Electronics Show.

"Since the launch of the W800 flagship Walkman phone in August last year, consumers across the world have been embracing the concept of the mobile phone as a credible digital music player, and enjoying high quality music anywhere, anytime without having to carry a dedicated music device. Sony Ericsson's Walkman phones are redefining how consumers listen and enjoy music, and the W810 strengthens our music phone line-up with the addition of dedicated music buttons on the front of the phone and an expanded choice of how users upload music to the phone," said Miles Flint, president of Sony Ericsson.

Unveiled was the Sony Ericsson W810, a Quad-band EDGE phone (850/900/1800/1900 MHz) that enables users to transfer their legacy CD collection or access operator music download services, while staying connected anywhere in the world.

This sophisticated new Walkman phone model in Satin Black with orange trim comes with a 512MB removable Memory Stick, which can be upgraded to 2GB currently available in retail outlets. This allows a wealth of music tracks, photos, video and other multimedia files to be stored on the phone.

The W810 supports industry standard MP3 and AAC music file formats and comes complete with quality HPM-70 stereo headphones which feature a

standard 3.5 mm headphone jack for personal customization.

Consumers can easily and quickly load music to the phone; either uploading their legacy CD collection onto the W810 from a PC via USB 2.0 using the provided Disc2Phone music management software, or by purchasing new music from operator specific over-the-air download services. This enclosed PC software makes it easy to sort, browse and transfer files on the 512 MB Memory Stick PRO Duo, which provides capacity for approximately 150 music tracks - the equivalent of around 15 full length CDs.

A dedicated Walkman button pulls up the music menu regardless of what other application on the phone is in use. Positioned just below the phone's screen are all the most common music controls needed (Play/Pause/Stop/Skip Track/Volume) to move easily between tracks or adjust the volume on the speaker or headphones. Engaging Mega Bass improves the sound experience even further.

As with other members of the Walkman phone family, music automatically pauses when an incoming call is received and begins playing again when the call ends. The phone can also operate in a music-only mode for those occasions when the phone function must be disengaged, such as during air travel.

The W810 is equipped with EDGE Class 10 technology, to allow quick and easy data transfers and Internet access, and Bluetooth Wireless technology for connectivity with Bluetooth handsfree headsets and sharing data with other Bluetooth-enabled devices.

The Sony Ericsson W810 is also a great imaging device enabling users to capture great still pictures and video featuring with integrated 2 mega pixel, auto-focus camera with photo light, and easily recognizable digital still camera interface.

Meantime, the new Walkman-branded accessories are the Portable Speakers MPS-60 and the Music Desk Stand MDS-60.

The Portable Speakers MPS-60 can be plugged into a Sony Ericsson mobile phone to enjoy stereo sounds. Stylish and lightweight, the speakers are powered from the mobile phone. It is packaged with a travel case and comes in black, gray and silver.

For those serious about sound quality and functionality, the Walkman-branded Music Desk Stand MDS-60 allows phone charging while music is playing. Compact and slim yet with a very rich sound, its sleek design makes it the perfect for the desk or at home. Its protective folding design allows true mobility. The Music Desk Stand MDS-60 comes with loudspeaker covers in white and orange. The MDS-60 comes in silver, white and orange.

The MDS-60 and MPS-60 are the newest additions to a complete portfolio of Sony Ericsson music accessories. The range includes, among other products, the Stereo Portable Handsfree HPM-70, the FM Music Transmitter MMR-60, the Music Cable MMC-60 and Home Audio System MDS-70.

The Sony Ericsson W810 starts shipping globally Q1 2006, as well as the Portable Speakers MPS-60. The Music Desk Stand MDS-60 follows globally in Q2 2006.

Malate Crown Plaza: Modern living within your reach

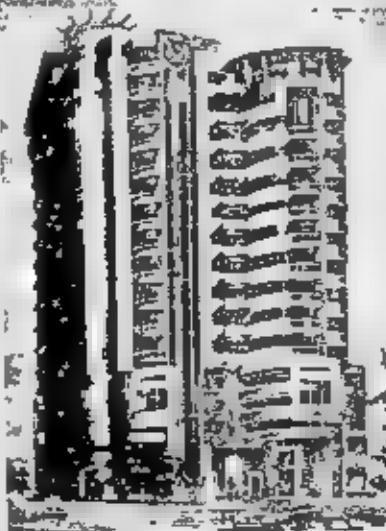
RIGHT IN THE HEART OF MALATE, Manila's famous entertainment district, lies the crown of Malate - the Malate Crown Plaza, a 17 storey premier residential and commercial condominium at the corner of Adriatico and San Andres Streets.

Malate Crown Plaza features stylish condominium residences ranging from studio-type, one-bedroom, two-bedroom and three-bedroom units. The condominium project is now complete, ready for occupancy and is 90 percent sold out, with the units turned over to its buyers in May last year.

Aside from providing its residents with picturesque views of the wonderful Manila Bay sunset and allowing them to spend serene afternoons gazing at this famous spectacle, this newest landmark in Malate also offers excellent amenities designed for a cosmopolitan lifestyle.

One can have fun swimming in the clean blue waters of its pool and maintain a healthy body at the gym and sauna or play badminton at the condominium's roof deck. It has a spacious lobby, a high ceiling and ample ventilation and lighting, and is also equipped with a 24-hour security, intercom and CCTV monitoring system.

Apart from these, Malate Crown Plaza is also complete with two scenic and one service elevator, a three-level parking space, a standby generator and a fire alarm and sprinkler system.



which makes it truly an ideal home for businessmen, middle to top executives, retirees, expatriates, as well as investors in search of a secure financial decision.

Located at the bustling corner of Adriatico and San Andres Streets, the condominium is also highly suitable for business and retail establishments. Commercial spaces are available at the ground floor, basement and mezzanine that would be viable for restaurants, convenience stores, coffee shops, banks, music lounge and bars, spas and fitness centers and travel and tours, among others.

Being at the vantage point of Mani-

la's tourist belt, it likewise provides residents convenient access to malls, schools, a church and a market. Leisure and entertainment centers also abound, with malls such as Robinsons Place Manila and Harrison Plaza just a few minutes away, while Remedios Circle and its row of bars and restaurants, is just around the corner.

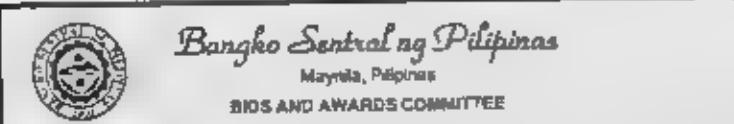
Malate Crown Plaza is beside Malate Catholic School and near San Andres Fruit Market, Malate Church, Anstocrat Restaurant, Pure Gold Supermarket, Rajah Sulayman Park and the newly-developed Roxas Boulevard Bay Walk.

Inside the building, one can find Metrobank, Blue Sea Foot Spa, Izakaya Tasho Japanese Restaurant, a photo and video shop and a travel agency.

Residential units are attractively priced starting from P1.7 million and above to appeal to practical home buyers and investors.

With all these attractions, life is definitely better at Malate Crown Plaza. It offers convenience, comfort and security. Truly an ideal residence where everything you need and the luxury of modern living are within your easy reach.

For inquiries, please call (632) 536-0033, (632) 404-0509 and (0917) 530-7871. You can also e-mail them at malatecrown@yahoo.com or visit their website at www.malatecrownplaza.philcondos.com.



INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereinunder project.

Name of Project: Best Description	Item 1 - One (1) lot replacement of the existing 13,700 fluorescent lamps of 40 and 20 watts with 25 and 17 watts T-8, slim-type energy efficient lamps, respectively, including 5,650 electronic ballasts per BSP Scope of Work and Specifications.
Approved Budget for the Contract	Item 1 - P8,505,000.00 Item 2 - P14,268,000.00
Contract Duration	Within four (4) months after receipt of Notice to Proceed

Prospective bidders should have undertaken a similar project within the last five (5) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding per lot. The Eligibility Checklist/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All participants relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	3. January 2006 - 15 February 2006
2. Pre-Bid Conference	17 February 2006 2:00 p.m.
3. Opening of Bids	07 March 2006 2:00 p.m.
4. Bid Evaluation	1 This shall be in accordance with the prescribed periods allowed in the Implementing Rules & Regulations (IRR) of R.A. No. 9184 dated 10 January 2004.
5. Post-Qualification	
6. Notice of Award	

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P4,250.00 for Item 1 and P7,480.00 for Item 2 to the BSP Cashier. The BSP assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expense incurred in the preparation of the bid.

The BSP reserves the right to reject any and all bid proposals or declare the bidding as void or cancel the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) MELVIN A. GONZAGA
Vice-Chairman

IPDI - January 31, 2006

MHS Grand Alumni Night

MAXATI HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI CIRCA '81 IN participation with Makati High School Foundation Day Celebration 2006 presents MHS Grand Alumni Night (Batch 1972 to 2005) on Feb. 18, at 5 p.m., and MHS Class '81 Silver Anniversary on April 19, at 4 p.m. to be held at Makati High School grounds located at General Luna St. barangay Poblacion, Makati City. For more details contact Mira Manafo at 895-9243, Fe Gratace at 881-3707, Noel Alejos at 779-3984 and Lea Lumabao at 814-2170 or e-mail at leafumabao@yahoo.com or visit the website http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MHSAlumniCirca_81

AHS Class '71 get together

CALLING THE ATTENTION OF ALL GRADUATES of Araullo High School Batch 1971, there will be a Alumni Homecoming on Feb. 18 at Araullo High School at Taft Avenue cor U.P. Avenue, Manila. For particulars, please call Lilibeth Meyra-Tiu at 890-2554; Lynette Bernardo-Morillas at 400-7281; Susan N. Pasci at 927-4245 local 4101; Mirs Guldung-Mendoza at 839-7295/0916-386-2139; Arlet Salonga at 850-4056/0918-929-1752; Ed. Savares at 589-53-22/0919-816-8703

Alliance formed to fight rotavirus infection

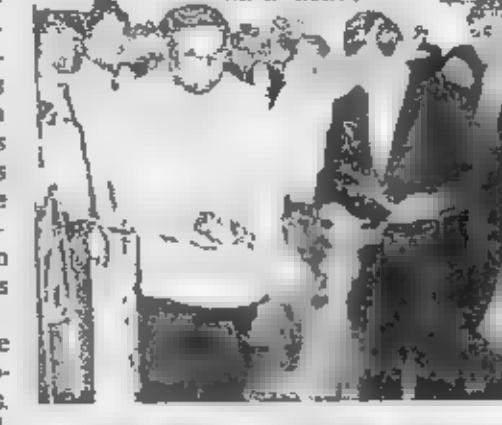
A GROUP OF DOCTORS FORMED AN ALLIANCE TO intensify the fight against rotavirus infection, a disease that causes severe diarrhea and vomiting among infants and children. Called RotaPhil (Rotavirus Working Group for Training and Advocacy of Healthcare Personnel in the Philippines), the alliance is part of an effort to heighten awareness about rotavirus infection and to educate the public



SEAIR, SUPERFERRY INTERLINE AGREEMENT

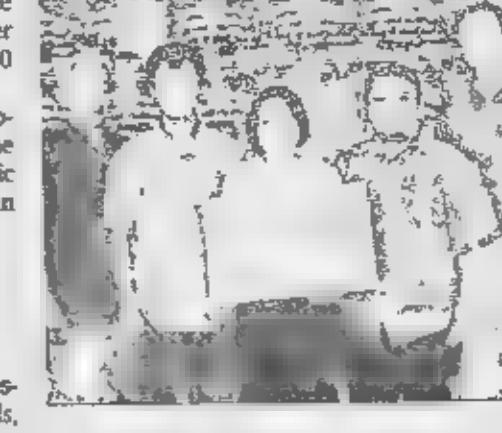
Domestic carrier South East Asian Airlines (SEAIR) has tied up with Superferry, the country's leading sea transport, for the Sail and Fly and Sea and Air SuperConnect Promos, which allow travelers to maximize their island-hopping experience and budget by traveling to selected routes via SEAIR and Superferry. Sail and Fly offers seamless transfers in air and sea travel covering Manila-Caticlan/Dumaguete, Cebu-Caticlan/Dumaguete, Manila-Busanga/Puerto Princesa, Cebu-Sta. Cruz, Cebu-Camiguin, Cebu-Catbalogan and Manila-Cebu. Sail and Fly packages also include 3 days/2 nights hotel accommodations with breakfast. Sea and Air SuperConnect increases the frequency of

trips and complements the routes of both SEAIR and Superferry. Promo period is until further notice. For inquiries and a full listing of routes included in the Sail and Fly and Sea and Air Promos, call SEAIR at (02) 849-0100 or Superferry at (02) 528-7000. Signing the contract are (from left) Capt. Elesio Taborda, vice president for operations, SEAIR; Capt. Nikos Gitis, executive director, SEAIR; Patrick Tan, vice president for commercial affairs, SEAIR; Ava Engel, executive vice president and CEO for passenger travel and leisure, Superferry; Andrew Deyo, associate vice president for revenue management, Superferry; and Pam Reyes, segment head, Superferry.



PNB INAUGURATES GSIS BRANCH

The Philippine National Bank opens its GSIS Branch at Level 1, GSIS Financial Center in Pasay City. At the ribbon-cutting ceremony last Dec. 15 were GSIS President and General Manager Winston Garcia (left) and PNB president and CEO Omar Byron T. Mier (right). As a service partner PNB reinforces PNB's bold initiatives to provide a higher level of service to GSIS members. The newly opened PNB GSIS Branch is, therefore, expected to deliver greater convenience, reliability and responsiveness to myriad of government employees, pensioners, employees and suppliers at GSIS Headquarters. PNB GSIS Branch is the former PNB PiCC Branch



EQ PROMO GRAND WINNER

EQ Diapers recently concluded its highly successful nationwide promo 'Text-Panalo, New Year Pa-Premyo' EQ would like to congratulate the grand prize winner, Yolanda Tinoy from Cagayan de Oro City, who won P500,000 in cash. Also, EQ Diapers would like to thank the thousands of people who joined the promo. You have made it a great success. Keep on using EQ Diapers. In photo receiving her check is grand prize winner Yolanda Tinoy (center), flanked by (from left), Danny Chan (consultant, Golden Century Mktg), Craig Vuriol (husband of Ms. Tinoy), Guillermo D. Celis (distributor manager, J.S. Unilite), and Tomas Sia (owner Golden Century Mktg).

UNILAB DONATES P25M-WORTH OF ENERVON FOR POULTRY WORKERS

Fulfilling its commitment to help the nation prepare against bird flu, United Laboratories Inc (Unilab) signed a memorandum of agreement with the Department of Agriculture last Jan. 11, to donate P25 million worth of Enervon multivitamins to strengthen the immune system of poultry workers in the 21 bird flu hotspots in the country. Agriculture Secretary Domingo F. Panganiban (3rd from left) and Unilab president and CEO Carlos C. Ejercito (2nd from right) signed the MOA witnessed by Unilab and DA officials. The Enervon donation supplements Unilab's donation of US\$1.25 million worth of anti-bird flu medicines to the Dept. of Health last Dec. 1, for a total assistance to date of P91 million. Flanking Sec. Panganiban and Ejercito



DIGITAL EXCHANGE, ETC CHANNEL AWARD PROMO WINNERS

Digital Exchange, ETC Channel presented cool gadgets to the winners of the 'Name The Store' promo. Shown are (from left): Sony Ericsson's Patty Balao, Globelines' Bea Dacanay, PalmOne-Pod Central's Jed

Oulambao, Globelines' Jenny Velasco, Gary Ramirez of Digital Exchange, MJ Handyman of Globe Telecom, Globetrotter Wi-Fi's Martin Lopez, Mikey Rivera of Globe Telecom and Samsung's Annette Fragata.

4 Bits Clips

spirational songs, and share with you a work of heart that is Gawad Kalinga. The concert aims to raise funds for the various educational programs of the Prayer Mountain site in Arilipola, and to inspire people to participate in the work of nation building. This is organized by the Gawad Kalinga Bayanihan Brigade (or Prayer Mountain), which is a group of upyouths that are giving back to society by utilizing their professional skills to contribute to their adopted community.

PCHS Grand Reunion

CLASS 1956, GOLDEN JUBILARIAN OF THE PASAY City High School will host this year's grand alumni homecoming at the school campus on March 18, at 1 p.m. Co-hosts 1961 (Sapphire) and 1966 (Ruby) graduates will join the activities. Class 1952-1968 are also expected to attend. For inquiries, call Ligaya Marabia 831-9916, Tess Sampang 831-8653, Josie Belfair 913-4258, Ed Advincula 833-2311

Seminary 're-Juvenation'

ALL ALUMNI OF THE REDEMPTORIST JUVENATE in Antipolo are invited to three days of fun, reminiscing and "re-Juvenation" as the seminary holds its grand homecoming and reunion on Feb. 17 to 19, at the Redemptorist Retreat House in Lipa City, Batangas. Re-them and renew old ties and friendships with our brothers in faith. For details, call Ted Mendoza at 633-3683 or text him at 0918-9119062. You may also e-mail him at tjm185@yahoo.com; you may also e-mail Resti Reyes at restreyes@yahoo.com.

Godiva Skin Station Valentine's Day promo

GODIVA SKIN STATION OFFERS A VALENTINE'S Day promo to all its valued clients. Between Feb. 6 to 19, customers with a minimum of P500 service purchase are entitled to 1 free Godiva Teddy Bear Fun Soap (Club G



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for reservations / cancellations / corrections

Monday to Sunday

12:00 noon

Day before publication

OBITUARIES

REUBEN MARCO S. UMALI, JR.

*Passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on January 29, 2006*

He is survived by his wife Raquel; daughters Erika and Nina; parents Ruben and Girlie; brothers Sagy, King and Randy; sisters Kristine and Angel; sisters-in-law Agnes, Marj, Mabel and Mimax and brother-in-law Raffy as well as nephews & nieces. They and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains will lie in state at Bauhinia Chapel,
La Funeraria Paz-Sucat
(inside Manila Memorial Park) until
Thursday, February 2, 2006.



With faith in the Resurrection
THE DE LA SALLE BROTHERS OF THE PHILIPPINE DISTRICT
and THE PHILIPPINE LASALLIAN FAMILY
announce the death of

BR. ANDREW GONZALEZ FSC
(MACARIO ARNEDO GONZALEZ)



Born in Manila, Philippines on 29 February 1940 and died at the De La Salle University Medical Center, Dasmariñas, Cavite on 29 January 2006. He served as a De La Salle Brother for a total of 50 years.

A man of vision, a man with a mission, institution builder, academician, linguist, intellectual. A disciple and citizen, prophet and professional, who brought the transforming power of the Gospel to bear on every human endeavor in order to realize God's kingdom of truth, justice, love and peace.

His remains lie in state at the Chapel of the Most Blessed Sacrament De La Salle University, 2401 Taft Avenue, Manila.

The Mass of the Resurrection will be celebrated on Thursday, 02 February 2006, 9:00 am. Cremation will follow.

In lieu of flowers, we will appreciate donations to the DLSU Charity Hospital in Apalit, Pampanga. Please make checks payable to the "DLSU Science Foundation (for Br. Andrew Gonzalez FSC)"

"Even when I walk through a dark valley, I feel no harm. For you are at my side, your rod and staff give me courage..."
Psalm 23:4

Message of Condolence

We, the family of the late

Gemma B. Raymundo

July 13, 1949 - January 18, 2006

Wish to convey our sincerest gratitude and appreciation to our relatives, friends and all those who sent condolences, flowers, donations, offered Masses and prayers, called from abroad, attended the funeral rites and helped and comforted us in so many ways during our time of bereavement.

*In Loving Memory
on the 19th Death Anniversary of
RUFINO R. SANTOS, JR.*

who passed away on January 31, 1987

Holy Masses will be offered at the following churches:
St. Andrew, the Apostle Parish 8:30 am, 12:15 pm, 6:30 pm
Nicanor Garcia, Bel Air, Makati City
The National Shrine of Sacred Heart 7:00 am, 12:15 pm, 6:00 pm
Dio, Makati City
Sentruero de San Antonio Parish 12:15 pm
Forbes Park, Makati City
St. John Bosco Parish 7:30 am, 12:15 pm, 6:00 pm
Amauz, Makati City
St. Francis Church 6:00 am
Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City
St. Roque Parish Church 6:00 am
Pateros, Metro Manila
San Pedro Parish Church 6:00 am
San Pedro, Laguna

His family requests relatives and friends to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Our dearly beloved

**JERONIMO TEODORO
"TEDDY" W. CORPUS**

Joined his Creator on 29 January 2006 at the age of 39

His loving mother Bessie, children Tofi and CJ, fiancee Ira Remedios, siblings Anna C. Say, Atty. Emelyn Corpus-Martinez, Cenem and Victor, brothers-in-law Joey and Adrian, sisters-in-law Kat and Che, and his relatives request for prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Chapel D, Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Q.C. Final services will be held on Saturday, 4 February 2006.

OBITUARIES



ALEJANDRO AQUINO HERNANDEZ

Was called home to the Lord
on January 29, 2006 at the age of 69.

He shall be missed by his dearest wife Odette, children Maripi & Steve, Michelle, Mightor; grandson Jacob; relatives and friends.

Daily Holy Mass will be celebrated for his intentions at 8pm.

His remains lie in state at the Lashon Chapel at the Loyola Memorial Park, Sucat, Paranaque. Interment will be at the Manila Memorial Park.

The family requests your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

We will miss you Dad, you will always be in our hearts.

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"I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."
John 14:6

1st Death Anniversary of
BIBIANO GARCIA Y DE LA ROSA

By Agustín. He was born in Bulacan, Philippines

His wife Blanca de Guzman Sayo (†); children Anita (†) &

Dr. Gavino R. Barbosa (†); Jose (†) L. L. L. (†); Concepcion (†);

Silvia and Pilarito R. Peña.

Masses will be offered on January 31, 2006 at 6:00 p.m. at the following churches:
Sta. Monica Parish, Angat; St. Andrew Parish, Norzagaray;
St. Joseph Shrine, Pug, L. Q.C.; Lord of Divine Mercy Parish,
Sakaitan Village, Q.C.

- Finished (B.M. & High School) at Acañan de Manila de Manila
- Finished Bachelor on Artes (Instituto de Manila) & Peñita Mexican (Instituto de Manila)
- In 1934 R. 399, resp., USC
- Municipal Treasurer of Taguig City, Bulacan in 1905
- After passing just exam as Provincial Treasurer, he was assigned as Provincial
Treasurer of several provincial capitals of the South in Cavite
1906 - 1920

In Loving Memory
On the 21st Death Anniversary of
HONORIO POBLADOR, JR.

February 1, 2006

Holy Masses will be offered in his memory on
February 1, 2006 at the following churches:

SACRED HEART PARISH
Walled City of Mandaluyong ... 6:00 a.m.
MARI THE QUEEN PARISH
Little Baguio, San Juan, Metro Manila ... 6:00 a.m.
SANTUARIO DE SAN JUAN
Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila ... 7:15 a.m.
SAN MIGUEL PRO-CATHEDRAL
Gen. Santos, San Miguel, Manila ... 7:00 a.m.
OUR LADY OF SHIURAWS PARISH
P. J. Harrison Street, Pasay City ... 6:00 a.m.
SAN FELIPE Neri PARISH
City of Mandaluyong ... 6:00 p.m.
DON BOSCO D'MARAKATI
Pasay Royal City of Makati ... 6:00 p.m.
SAINT ANDREW PARISH
Bel-Air, City of Makati ... 6:30 p.m.
SANTUARIO DE SAN ANTONIO
Eccles Park, City of Makati ... 6:00 p.m.
ST. ALPHONSUS MARY DE LIGUOR CATHEDRAL
Magallanes Village, City of Makati ... 6:00 p.m.
ST. SEBASTIAN CATHEDRAL
Bambang City

SACRED HEART SHRINE
Garcia City ... 6:00 a.m.
SAN ANTONIO PARISH
Bacoor City ... 7:00 a.m.

His family requests relatives, friends and fellow readers to
pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

The Missionary Benedictine Sisters
SL Scholastica's Priory, Manila
announce the death of

Sister Lutgard Ramin, OSB

at St. Benedict's Home, Marikina
on January 28, 2006.

The sisters and their mission partners especially at
St. Scholastica's Academy, San Fernando, Pampanga,
where she spent 28 years of her religious life,
her brother Jose, 91 and sister Gloria, 89
and relatives from Ous, Alibuy request
the pious readers to pray for her.

Her remains lie in state at St. Scholastica's Chapel,
Manila.

Interment will be at Manila Memorial Park,
Parañaque on February 1, 2006 after the 9:00 a.m. Holy
Mass. Fr. Ed Ramin, her grandnephew will officiate
the Mass.

OSCAR H. LAGMAN, JR.

Peacefully joined our Creator
on January 28, 2006 at the age of 56.

His bereaved wife Tess Villanin, children Dominic & Grace,
Terence & Luis, Konkia & Pency and grandchildren Pauli, Astrid,
Pola, Alex, Thex, Niko & Yana. They and other relatives & friends
request the readers to join them in praying for his eternal happiness
in heaven.

His body lies in state at their residence at 83 San Agustin, City
of San Fernando, Pampanga.

Interment will be on February 1, 2006 at the Good Shepherd
Memorial Park, Dolores, CAVI after the 9:30 a.m. Mass at the San
Agustin Church.

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OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:

• Copy of Death Certificate. • Any identification document (I.D.)

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CLASSIFIEDS

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Environmental Management Bureau-Cordillera Administrative Region (EMB-CAR) lot #442-2346) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project

Name of Project: Procurement and Installation of an Air Quality Monitoring Equipment in Baguio City, briefly described as: One (1) lot, Towable Continuous Automatic Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Equipment with Telemetry System (tba), would suit Baguio City's Topography and Climate, with an Approved Budget of Ten Million Pesos (P10,000,000.00) with Contract Duration of One Hundred Twenty days (120) (Installation, Commissioning and Training of EMB Personnel/manpower) and Delivery Period of Ninety Days (90)

Checklist of eligibility requirements for bidders is available at the BAC Secretaries.

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least 60% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use the non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post Qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted. Further, interested suppliers/bidders may submit documents for eligibility check as per RA 9184 (envelope A) on February 10, 2006 to the BAC Chairman upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Ten Thousand Pesos (P10,000.00) to qualify for bidding.

A pre-bid conference shall be held on February 22, 2006, 2:00 p.m. at the EMB-CAR Conference Area, DENR-CAR Compound, Gibraltar Road, Baguio City. Deadline for the submission of the following is a refundable fee of 2.5% Surety Bond and Technical Specification of the equipment (Envelope B) and Bid offer (Envelope C) will be on March 1, 2006 at 2:00 p.m., and the opening of bids will follow immediately.

The EMB reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any required formality therein, except the offer considered most advantageous to the government and annual bidding process and reject all bids of any time prior to award of the contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidders. The EMB further assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidder for any expenses or loss that may incur for the bidding and does not guarantee that an award will be made

(Sgd.) ENGR. ROLANDO C. REYES
Chairman, BAC



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More CLASSIFIED ADS on page B4

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or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

7. Bid opening shall be on March 7, 2006 / 10:00 A.M. at the Admin Conference Rm, some address below. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

8. The National Transmission Corporation reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to cancel the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidders or Owners.

National Transmission Corporation, Head Office Region
Mr. Armando N. Ochoa, BAC Chairman

MMD Office, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg.

Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner Bldg. Dikiran, Quezon City

Tel. No. (632) 8812235 / Fax No. (632) 9226432

Website: www.transco.ph

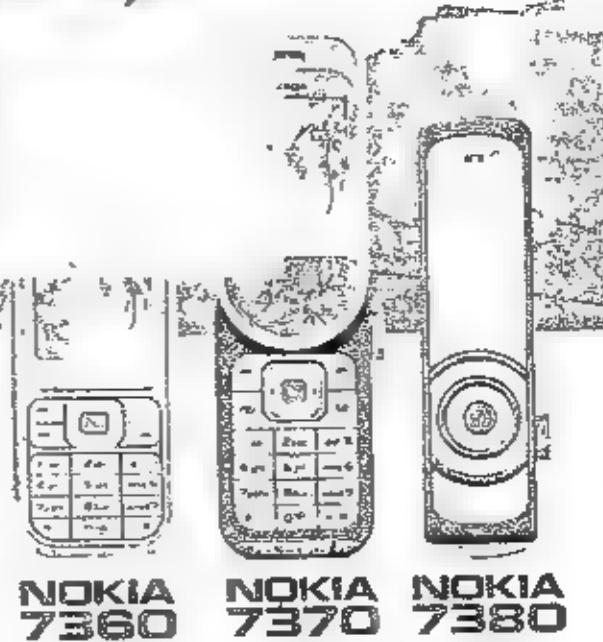
(Sgd.) ARMANDO N. OCHOA
Chairman, Bids & Awards Committee

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TUESDAY,
JANUARY 31, 2006

Saving money via life insurance

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES



ASUN IS AN OBSTETRICIAN/gynecologist and a bosom friend of my anesthesiologist daughter Clarissa. Both work in Ospital ng Makati. Recently, Clarissa brought home a life insurance proposal Asun had received from a financial adviser, actually an agent.

Asun wanted to find out what I thought of the proposal. Asun was being offered a variable life insurance policy, or simply, a variable contract, as opposed to a standard fixed contract.

When you buy a standard 20-year endowment policy, with a sum insured of P100,000, you are actually buying two contracts fused into one. The first contract guarantees that if you die anytime within the 20-year period, your beneficiary receives P100,000. This is the death benefit. The second contract guarantees that if you survive the 20-year period, you receive P100,000. This is called the living benefit.

The price, or premium, you pay is fixed throughout the 20-year term. Along the way, there are the non-forfeiture benefits. For example, there is the cash value, which you can borrow. Or, if you want to discontinue the policy, the sum insured is reduced.

The insurance company splits the premium. The first part is used to pay for a term insurance policy; this takes care of the death benefit. The second part is invested at a guaranteed fixed rate, usually 8 percent; this is the living benefit.

At the start, the term insurance is for the full P100,000. As the investment portion builds up, the term insurance is reduced. Throughout the 20-year period, the sum of the term insurance and the investment portion always equal P100,000. The living benefit you get at the end of the 20-year period is the investment portion alone.

Under a variable contract, Asun buys two contracts fused into one, as well. The first contract is still the term insurance contract, the death benefit. The second contract, the living benefit, is variable. Investment earnings are not guaranteed. They can be lower or higher than under the standard life insurance policy. The company has an investment pool into which Asun's premium will be placed. The earnings depend on how well or ill the investment pool makes out.

By the way, Asun was being offered a policy denominated in US dollars. This makes the policy attractive, but the premium will also have to be paid in US dollars.

Under the variable contract, Asun will be betting that the company's investment pool will do very well.

I made no comparative study of the premiums of the standard and the variable contract. But my gut feel is, dollar for dollar, the premium for a variable contract is higher.

I advised Asun that if she has enough of the standard type of life insurance policy to protect her three children still in school, then, and only then, should she consider buying the variable contract.

Asun's problem is not how much money she will have at age 65, which is quite attractive under the variable contract, assuming the investment fund does well.

Asun's bigger problem is how much money will her three children have so they could go on with the kind of lives they have been used to if a runaway truck rams her car while she is coming home late one evening after an operation in the hospital.

It is not what may happen to Asun 14 years from now. It is what might happen tonight.

Makati office ...

From page B1
center seats had grown dramatically to 60,000 at the end of last year from only 1,500 seats at the end of 2000.

Radovan said new projects were being constructed in alternative CBDs such as the Bay Area and Bonifacio Global City where land was available.

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Editor Cheko Banal-Formoso

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Menopause is not a disease

By Elizabeth Lelarga
Contributor**D**R. MICHAELA GLOCKLER assured women that menopause is not a time of chaos or a form of disease.

Rather, she said, it is "a period of life which needs to be considered, created and worked with. Treatment is only necessary when hope has run out and the need for help is greatest."

Glockler gave a lecture at Balay Kalinaw on the invitation of a group headed by Maribel Francisco.

The physician's expertise is anthroposophy, which means human wisdom. The term, coined by Rudolf Steiner, refers to the body of knowledge about the human being and the whole universe that he systematized, drawing from Eastern and Western sources.

Glockler, who studied medicine in Tübingen and Marburg and trained further as a pediatrician at the Community Hospital in Herdecke and at the Bochum University Pediatric Clinic, criticized the pharmaceutical industry for making hormones available worldwide in the same way vitamins and supplements were peddled. She said, in truth, the products are not necessary.

She said the age-old truth is that "every woman goes through menopause." She warned that hormonal treatment might be "bad if taken too long."

Glockler cited a 2004 study that showed the group that did not receive any hormones fared better than the one that did. The women who were administered the estrogen-progestin mix was found to be more prone to heart attacks, strokes and osteoporosis (brittle bones).

She said estrogen could be taken only briefly for crisis situations but not for the long term.

Culture-bound

Glockler, head of the medical section of the Goetheanum, the School of Spiritual Science in Dornach, Switzerland, also mentioned a 1994 study that looked at menopause in different cultures.

It seemed that the way women suffered during this period depended on cultures and lifestyles.

In Japan, there were no menopausal problems that there was not even a term for it in the language. Japanese women simply associated menopause with aging and they



ILLUSTRATION: LAMISTADES

The Japanese consider it a normal part of aging and do not even have a term for it in their language

considered it a normal part of the process.

But in Europe and the United States in the last two decades, women sought to stay young for as long as possible. They resorted to all sorts of remedies to slow aging.

The doctor did note that aging brought certain diseases related to menopause like depression, the No. 1 problem among women.

Glockler, author of the book "A Guide to Child Health," said lifestyles are related to the health of an aging population.

The age of 35 is the "cross zenith of the building up and stabilizing process of the body. Slowly, one loses bone mass." Men suffer less osteoporosis because they have more bone mass.

Get moving

Glockler suggested that to prevent bone problems in midlife and later, girls must be helped during the growing-up period to be as physically active as boys so they would develop more bone mass.

The physical constitution needs movement, especially for the heart and circulatory system.

ry system. By moving enough, you bring good feelings in your conscious lives. People need movement through dancing or going to the gym. In ancient cultures, movement existed. People were not reliant on cars," she noted.

"If we don't learn to move, movement being part of the body's intelligence, then we have lost the key to health, and the aging process starts," she warned.

The physician said a healthy human is not only made up of a working physiology and life forces but also of emotional and spiritual capacities. There are soul movements and tensions as much as body movements and tensions.

She said a person has an astrality—astral forces taken from the stars. Astrality has to do with living consciously with one's emotions and working creatively with one's relationships.

Menopause could be a problem of astrality, she said, when a woman loses the system of movement. Emotional imbalance follows, and the main symptoms can be felt at the soul's level.

She discouraged dependence on artificial hormones, saying that the body learns its own natural work. At the same time, she assured women that gaining 4-7 kg of weight during menopause is normal because the fat cells actively produce hormones.

Thin women, she warned, suffer more from osteoporosis than fat women. "It's better to find other ways to show beauty other than by the kilo," Glockler quipped.

Exercising twice a day, even if only for 5 minutes each instance, allows the heart to nourish the whole body. When done religiously in half a year or so, the body is reeducated to produce natural hormones.

She also said menopausal women should eat less phosphates and acids from meat and shift to more vegetables to teach the body to become more alkaline than acidic. They should also have less coffee and tea and stay away from sweet juices.

Message

Though a person in the mid-40s and mid-50s might still feel fully engaged with life, Glockler said, "More and more the body will not be as it was before. One has passed a lifetime and at the same time there is another one in front of us. Unconsciously, this may cause depression, the feeling that one hasn't made good use of one's time or one didn't have a life."

But she added that even men feel a loss of physical power.

"All life is a spiritual and biological development... [and] aging becomes a maturation process so, when we die, we take our soul with us that has gone through a purification process," she said.

"The message of menopause," she summed up, "is to live better and better, to get rid of doubts, insecurities and fears, and wake up to life's meaning."

Int'l hygiene symposium slated in Manila

SOME 150 HEALTH AND HYGIENE professionals from seven countries will be in Manila on Feb. 9-10 to discuss development interventions at the 2nd International Health and Hygiene Symposium.

The symposium theme, "Better Health and Hygiene: Today's Challenges, Tomorrow's Hopes," makes strong reference to the United Nations' millennium development goals, which have included sanitation and hygiene in the plan of implementation, and the global community's acknowledgement of the importance of health and hygiene promotion as development interventions.

Hosted by Procter & Gamble Distributing Phils. Inc. (P&G), through its flagship brand Safeguard, the symposium is a follow-through to the first one held in Beijing, China, in 2002, then hosted by the Safeguard Research Institute of Family Health.

This international gathering is

made more significant because Safeguard is marking its 40th anniversary since its introduction to the Philippine market in 1966. P&G and Safeguard have been forging successful partnerships with prestigious organizations like Unicef, DOH and the Philippine Association of Medical Technologists.

Expected to attend are key scientific and government thought leaders from China, Russia, Pakistan, Mexico, Singapore, US and the Philippines, the host country.

They will be addressed by Philippine Health Secretary Francisco T. Duque, who is expected to reiterate the global challenge of health and hygiene promotion, education and intervention to improve the health, well-being and economic productivity of the population.

The two-day symposium aims to share scientific data and knowledge on the importance and effectiveness of good hygiene practices in preventing and controlling diseases. Another objective is to exchange hygiene education and intervention program experience among participating countries, especially where public and private sector collaboration is concerned.

The World Health Organization reports that nearly 40 percent of the world's population (2.4 billion) have no access to personal hygiene measures, resulting to death from various diseases caused by inadequate sanitation.

The WHO supports moves to reduce hygiene-related illnesses by increasing access to sanitation and improving hygiene practices.

Symposium participants are expected to come up with proposed action plans for governments, non-government organizations, the scientific community and private sector to address the problem.

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LIFESTYLE



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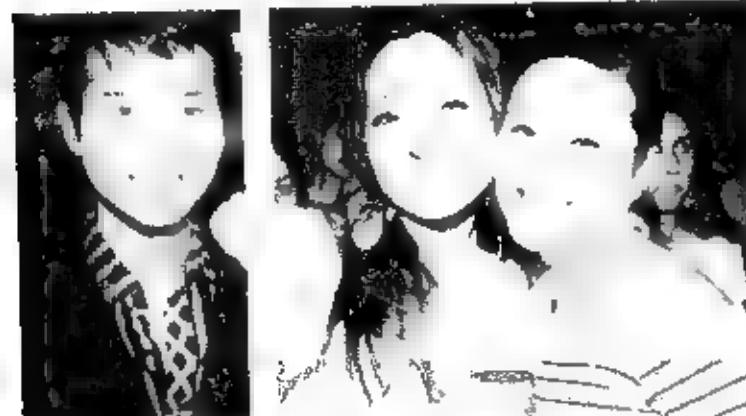
SUPERMODEL PAIR. Gorgeous Ornusa Cadness and swoon boy Borgy Manotoc



HIP party owls. Chopard's Cat Arambulo, DJ Manolet Darlo, adorable Chinggay Andrade, wow Alex Gutierrez, southern gent JM Rodriguez, Embassy's hot Ivan Zalameda, young PR whiz GP Reyes and DJ Karl Ty



SUPERFLY'S Leo Po, super gal Marielle Santos, Rosanna Ocampo, Cris Yam, Alexi Alunan and Nikki Sarmiento toasting Johnnie Walker



EMBASSY'S main man Erik Cua



HINDY Weber-Tantoco cheek-to-cheek with Astrud Crisologo



FASHION maven Lulu Tan Gan was one of the honorees.



THREE'S definitely not a crowd: Raymond Gutierrez, Georgina Wilson and photographer Raymund Isaac



A happy 200th to the 'walking' man

IT WAS ONE GLITZY 200TH BIRTHDAY party for the man who started it all, John Walker, no less, the original Master Blender and founder of Johnnie Walker, "the world's best-selling brand of Scotch Whisky."

And what a bash it was, *palanggas*. Johnnie Walker Gold Label sponsored the whole shebang, simply called *Holidaze*, a "thank-you" party for the loyalists of the hippest nightspot, Embassy Cuisine and Super Club.

The ultra-clue happening was superbly hosted by no other than Embassy's main man, brilliant Eric Cua, cool Jon Herrera and, no-treatement, my supah pal Tim Yap.

The strictly by-invitation-only affair got rolling with a sumptuous dinner and cocktails for Manille's A-listers: southern gentleman JM Rodriguez; multilingual Ipe Cruz; Michelle and Tina Pamuntuan, Mariko Jacinto; international businessmen Ricky Delgado; and Marcel Crespo, with his ladylove, adorable Celine Lopez, Cat Arambulo; Century Tuna's Lep P, Cris Yam; Ivan Zalameda and Rene Barbier's Pro Oliva, plus so many others too popular to

Yes, *palanggas*, the exclusive VIP guest list was followed and the velvet rope was kept in place that night. Those who were not on the list just had to turn around and head for other nightspots in the city.

The party sizzled even more when the gorgeous, eye-catching Johnnie Walker Gold Label ladies started to serve the golden whisky, a truly fab blend. I was told that the best way to enjoy Gold Label "is to freeze it for 24 hours to release its light fruity flavors and true honey sweetness, as the whisky warms in the mouth, and also to serve it with bitter chocolate dessert, for a truly indulgent experience."

As a true whisky connoisseur would say, "To drink is to savor the richer pleasure of a truly golden whisky." Hey, though *me* ain't a whisky drinker, I'll have to say amen to that, dahlings.

Women power

Check this out, *palanggas*. There's an awesome female force upon us. Filipino women have come a long way since Maria Clara's passive, docile days, dahling. Our gals have blossomed and are achieving their highest potential.

The hard-to-beat Summit Media, the country's top magazine publishing company, celebrates the modern Filipina and recognizes her need for a magazine that will help her as she continues to make important strides in her career, attitude and lifestyle. A couple of sleeps ago, Summit Media launched the most excit-

ing women's title to hit our shores, *Marie Claire Phils.*, the 26th edition of the cool, groundbreaking women's magazine that first appeared in France in 1954.

Marie Claire's formal launching was held at the chic new Rockwell tent, *palanggas*. The grand gala brought together women of substance and style who epitomize the ideals of *Marie Claire*.

The tons of invitees were greeted by a photo exhibit, "What Women See: Inspiring Images of Women by Women," with photos by renowned female photographers Joan Bitagcol, Sara Black, Wowie Navarozza, Joanne Zapanta and Lyn Rillon.

The magazine also honored the "25 Most Incredible Filipino Women," featured in their premiere issue. Some of the hot, awesome women honorees who graced the event were Maria Ressa, Yasmine Busran Lao, Che Che Lazaro, Gaita Pores, St. Mary John Manamanan, Margie Holmes, Emily Abrera, Odette Alcantara, Gilda Cordero-Fernando, Queenie Lee-Chua, Marites Vitug, Impy Piapil, Teresita Ang-See, Wilma Doesnt, Rissa Hontiveros and Socorro Ramos. The late spitfire lady Haydee Yorac was represented by Sandy Olfato.

Another highlight was a fab fashion show featuring the gorgeous, eye-catching creations of today's top female designers Handy Weber-Tantoco, Lulu Tan Gan, Kate Torralba, Yvonne Quisumbing, Mitzi Quislendrino and Katrina Goulbourn.

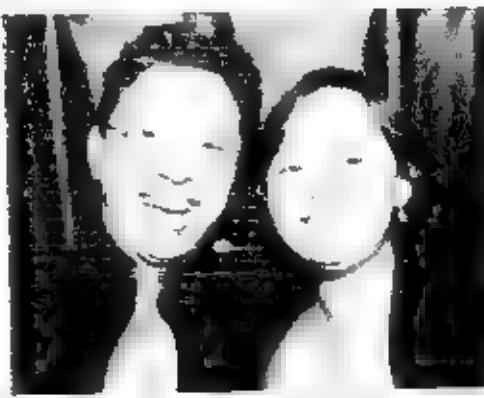
The fashion show featured French fashion, Filipino design, and the six must-have key trends, *palanggas*.

Okay, gals, if you're a woman who moves the world, rush out and grab a copy of *Marie Claire* magazine, with gorgeous A-caliber actress Iza Calzado on the cover. You'll learn what every girl wants to know, *palanggas*.

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen using Kodak EasyShare



POWER COUPLE. VMV's Laura Verallo and Juampi de Bertotto

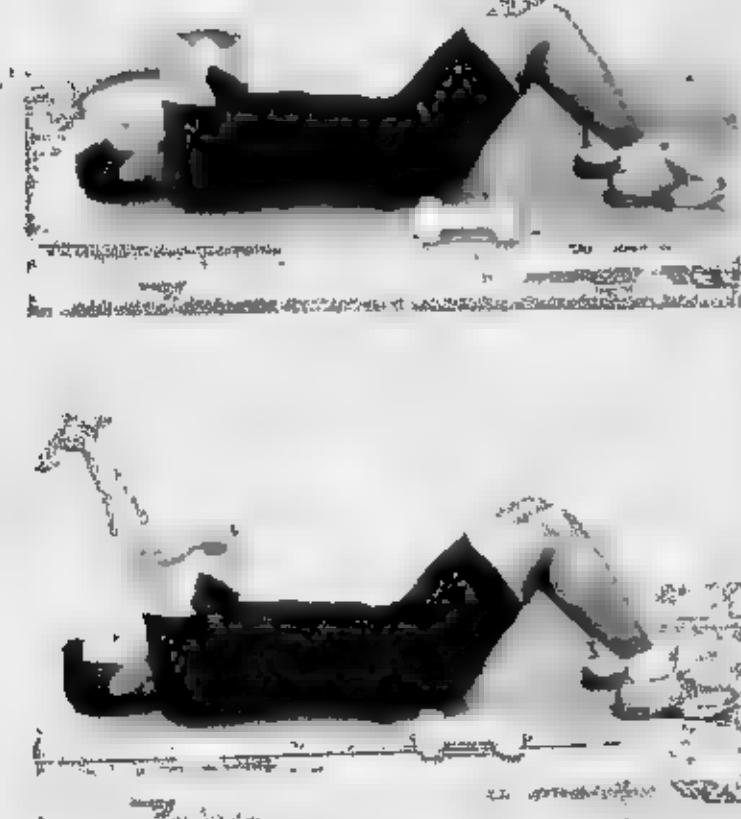


MOD SQUAD. Karen Kunawicz, Wawi Navarozza, Katrina Lagman and Goo Simpliciano

CHEERS! French Ambassador Gerard Chesnel, Marie Claire International editorial director Florence du Luart, Marie Claire Philippines editor in chief Myrza Sison and Daphne Oseña-Paez toast to *Marie Claire*.

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Supine triceps extension



FIRMS THE MUSCLES in the back of the arms (triceps).

Equipment:
— Dumbbells and an exercise mat

Exercise technique:

1. Lie on your back with knees bent and feet on the floor.

2. Hold one dumbbell in the right hand. Bring it straight on top of you, bend the elbow and hold the right arm with the left hand to keep the shoulder steady.

3. The elbow of the working arm should be facing the ceiling. Starting and ending position should be with the elbow bent.

4. Concentrate on squeezing the triceps muscle as you straighten the elbow.

5. Slowly bend the elbow.

Performance tips:
1. Keep the elbow facing the ceiling.

2. Think of your triceps as a sponge; squeeze the water out of that muscle with each contraction.

3. Straighten the elbow to fully contract the triceps, but watch out for locking or jerking the elbow joint.

4. If your shoulder or elbow joints hurt while doing this exercise, stop.

Repetitions:
Do 12-15 repetitions per arm.

FAQs on abdominal exercises

Part 2

HERE ARE ANSWERS TO common questions about abdominal exercises (based on a lecture by Dr. Len Kravitz). For the complete report, go to <http://www.unm.edu/~lkravitz/Article%20folder/abdominal.html>

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan



torso. Basically, it's the point at which the shoulder blades come off the floor.

Should you do ab exercises daily or three times a week?

Currently, there is no single study showing a greater benefit in doing the exercises daily or several times a week.

Should you pull the abs in while doing abdominal exercises?

Yes, to activate the transversus abdominis (TVA), which is the deepest abdominal muscle. It has horizontal fibers, which are the foundation for all the other fibers to attach to. The TVA wraps around to attach to the same connective tissue in the lower back area that the internal obliques attach to.

Is it okay to use resistance with abdominal training?

Definitely, to create more tension. But only after mastering the proper technique without resistance.

Is there an ideal sequence in working the abdominal muscles?

No, because you should use a multi-stimulus approach.

How high should you go up in a crunch?

Crunch height is about 30°-45° depending on the length of the

study at the 2005 American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) convention. Here's an excerpt from the ACSM news release.

"In another phase of the study, the team measured abdominal muscle activity during key Pilates mat exercises. Participants performed five Pilates 'ab' exercises, then basic crunches for comparison.

"Results showed that the rectus abdominis muscle, which runs along the midsection of abdomen, was challenged similarly for most of the Pilates exercises. However, the Teaser exercise and Roll-Up challenged this abdominal muscle more than the crunch.

"The external obliques, the muscles on either side of the abdomen, were challenged to a greater degree by all of the Pilates exercises compared to the basic crunch.

"In particular, the Criss-Cross was the most effective for the external obliques. However, the Teaser exercise also activated the hip flexors to a marked degree. Thus, this exercise may be best reserved for very advanced individuals or athletes."

Visit www.tinajuanfitness.info

Shift to parliamentary form scary

THE HUMAN MIND HAS A tendency, when confronted with a problem that needs a solution, to mistake the effect for the cause.

I am reminded of this faulty reasoning by those long-winded discussions about the need to change our present presidential form of government to a parliamentary one following some foreign model.

It is argued that the presidential form is no longer working for us, that it keeps us from progressing. The proponents say almost all economically advanced countries have adopted the parliamentary form.

But are we ready for such a radical change?

In the Philippines, whenever a government agency is inefficient or full of anomalies, it is dissolved, replaced with a new agency with a different name.

However, most of the people in the defunct agency are retained. By changing the structure and name of the agency, it is assumed the quality of service will improve and the problem solved.

Same dog

For example, people didn't like the Philippine Constabulary. It was deemed

corrupt and inefficient. The solution was to set up another agency, the Philippine National Police. But since the people from the Philippine Constabulary were appointed to the new agency, it became obvious after a while that nothing really changed. The same dog simply got a different name.

The Bureau of Internal Revenue was deemed to be another graft-ridden agency. So there was a proposal to dissolve it and create a new agency to solve the problem. Fortunately, thinking people intervened and the plan was aborted.

Shakespeare said, "A rose by any name will smell just as sweet." By the same token, "A skunk by any name will stink just the same!"

I am really scared by all these talks about amending the Philippine Constitution and shifting from the presidential to the parliamentary form of government.

As a people, we simply are not ready for such a shift. We do not have the political culture and tradition and political maturity to make such a system work.

A political system, like language, cannot be imposed from the outside. It must be the product of the history, culture and values of the people.

This is why American-style democracy, imposed on Asian Philippines, does

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco



not work here, although we like to believe it does. Philippine-style democracy has very little similarity with American democracy. We have all the external features of democracy, all right, but not the traditions, way of thinking, culture and discipline that make it work in the United States. For one thing, we can't even start or finish anything on time in this country. Never mind a host of other differences!

We often mistake form for substance, the accidental for the essential, the external for the internal. We brag about having free and democratic elections. But do we consider the rampant cheating and even killing that happen every election? Is that how democracy works?

We pride ourselves in having freedom of the press, but how much of media is truly independent? How much of media is owned by people with vested interests?

ests? We pride ourselves in having religious freedom, but how many politicians will risk opposing the church, or vote against its self-interest?

Not the problem

Let's not kid ourselves. The form or structure of the government is not our problem. We are barking at the wrong tree. We are putting the cart before the horse. We are mistaking the effect for the cause.

The basic problems of our people are their consciousness and mental attitude, not the structure of government.

Even if we changed the form of government, nothing will change, unless we can change the consciousness of our people, beginning with our political leaders and those working in government. We need not change the consciousness of everyone. That's impossible. If we can succeed in changing a critical mass, everything else will follow.

Unless we can do this, let us not mess around for the time being with our political system or structure of government, at least not within the next 10 years. Let's wait for a strong, honest and wise leader who will truly love his/her country and will serve it selflessly. Changing the form of government will

A political system must be the product of the history, culture and values of the people

not usher in a new era of progress for this country.

Let us not commit the mistake of the proud cock in Aesop's fable who was convinced it was his crowing that made the sun rise.

To paraphrase another Shakespearean line, "It is not in our form of government. Dear Joe, but in ourselves, that we are underrun."

Cagayan de Oro residents interested in attending my "Basic ESP and Intuition Development" seminar on Feb. 4-5, please contact Melissa Robante at 0917-7120253. Pampanga residents interested in "Soulmates, Karma and Reincarnation" seminar, Feb. 11, at Mimosa, Clark Field, Angeles City, contact Riza Lim at 0917-8436043.

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Nlite's stylishly crafted healthy Valentine packages will touch their heart and give them a healthy glow.

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1,000 Healthy Hugs & Kisses for him and her

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Nlite Valentine packages contain a mix of healthy treats such as sugar-free chocolate bars, chocolate chip cookies, chocolate fudge chews, oatmeal raisin cookies, pistachio and almond nuts, as well as stress-relief aids such as aromatherapy eye pillows, massage oils, scented candles, incense, oil burners, tea and even dream catchers.

The health-giving products are artfully packed, like the ultra-hip and

stylish Valentine backpack-box of His/Her Healthy Young Love, or the whimsical tuxedo heart box of Chocolat de Amour.

Each gift pack includes information on the healthful benefits of its

All packages can be price-customized and redesigned to fit your budget.

Nlite gifts are products of Ihealth, 85A West Capitol Drive, Brg. Kapitolyo, Pasig. Call 6366804 or fax 6366805. Visit www.thehealthcircle.com

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It just are the most common cancers of Filipinos today?

In the Philippines, cancer is the third leading cause of morbidity and mortality after cardiovascular and noncommunicable diseases. It can occur at any age but more frequently with advancing age. Recently, five percent (5%) of all cancers occur after the age of 50 and about 25% occurs at age 14 years and above. It is now estimated that 1 out of 1000 Filipinos has cancer. Based on the 2005 Philippine Cancer Facts and Estimates, the leading cancer sites for both sexes are lung, breast, colon/rectum, liver, cervix uteri, prostate, leukemia, stomach and thyroid. For males, the 5 most common cancer sites are lung, lung, colon/rectum, prostate and stomach. On the other hand, the most common cancer sites among women are the breast, cervix uteri, lung, colon/rectum and ovary. The increasing incidence of lung cancer is related to the growing number of smokers among Filipinos. Data from the same cancer registration indicated that the top three mortality cancer sites in males were lung, liver and leukemia, and among females were breast, lung and cervix uteri. Every year, the number of cancer-related deaths increases by thousands due to the low level of cancer awareness. Therefore, everyone should understand the importance of regular medical check-ups as a way to detect cancer early on since at least a third of all cancers can be cured if detected early and most cancers are actually preventable with proper healthy lifestyle.

This week's answer to our feature question was provided by our medical service provider at Cagayan De Oro Medical Center in Cagayan De Oro City, Dr. Rayna Christy Apacoco-Alba. Dr. Alba is a specialist in GI-Urology.

She obtained her medical degree at Dr. Jose P. Rizal College of Medicine, she took her residency training for Internal Medicine in 2000 and finished her subspecialty training for Oncology in 2004 at UP-NMH.

She is a fellow member of the Philippine College of Physicians, Philippine Society of Medical Oncology and a member of Mindanao Oncology Medical Society. Dr. Alba is married and blessed with one child.

MEDICard members may visit her at Cagayan De Oro Medical Center.

Monday to Friday from 8am-5pm.

MEDICard's Medical Director, Dr. Nicky Montaño answers questions on health through the assistance and expertise of MEDICard's network of accredited specialists. Write to Dr. Nicky or E-mail him at info@medicardphils.com for your inquiries on health matters.

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Monday to Friday from 8am-5pm.

A four-day detox program

ONE HOUSEWIFE COULDNT start her day without a cup of coffee. She needed the caffeine rush, or so she claimed, to keep her going. Averaging seven cups a day, she realized it was time to straighten herself out.

A businessman was always too busy to mind his diet. Entertaining clients often took its toll. He became overweight and a borderline alcoholic. When his weight hit 190 lbs, he realized he had to take con-

trol of his life.

A career woman and single parent was a highly accomplished executive, spending a lot of time working to advance in her profession. When she experienced constipation frequently, she became seriously concerned.

These are just some true-to-life experiences of real people who were on the road to illness but decided to make a real lifestyle turnaround.

INSIDE
OUT
Cory
Quirino



One step forward

It is said before any real change in life can happen, it must begin in

the mind. When you say to yourself "I wish to live longer and better," it's time to make a change without hesitation.

- Read up on health, particularly preventive medicine (if you have no health condition) or disease-management (if you are facing a health challenge)

- Consult your physician.
- Study your options, considering both Western and Eastern approaches to better health.

- Enrol in a detoxification program.

Internal house cleaning

It isn't only homes that need general cleaning. The body, the house your spirit lives in, also needs special cleaning.

At the Farm at San Benito in Lipa, Batangas, 10-ha of lush forest, landscaped gardens and well-appointed villas, the serious health enthusiast is in wellness heaven. Conceptualized and built by Eckard and Perla Rempe, it has since garnered prestigious awards, including the Spa Asia Crystal and Baccarat Awards.

There are five-, seven-, 14- and 21-day detox programs to suit your needs. The regimens involve body, mind and spirit.

A typical four-day mini-detox program is designed for people in a hurry.

Day one

As you check in, the resident manager will give you your personalized program.

Lunch: At 85/15 restaurant (aptly called because diners can have an 85-percent raw and 15-percent cooked meal) you get a heap of organic vegetables with a choice of veggie dressings. One is allowed a second helping of the same salad.

Clinic briefing: Resident doctors cheerfully explain your program point by point. Body measurements, including weight, are taken. A blood analysis follows, with the doctor clearly pointing out your blood profile and where there is a need for improvement. Of course, the idea behind this is to do a comparative study of before and after.

You get your ration of vitamins. Every day of your program is carefully packed with activities with enough rest periods in between.

In the late afternoon you get your first massage under the sky or early evening under the stars.

Dinner: Organic salad and juice. Evening entertainment is a movie at the library by a scenic pond. Though early bedtime is not imposed, the serenity of the

place will have you in bed by 9 p.m.

Day two

You move from the spa for your reflexology, Thai massage or salt bath to the yoga room or amphitheater for an inspirational talk by a life coach. A short lecture and video presentation by a doctor will open your eyes to the urgency and necessity to cleanse your body via the colon as well as the value of eating "live" foods rich in enzymes and nutrients, like vegetables and fruits, for optimum health. No solid foods are served. You get green juice throughout the day followed by a cleansing tea mixed with psyllium fiber and virgin coco oil. Surprisingly, you don't get an attack of hunger that will have you running to the nearest fast food joint.

Day three

The juicing kicks in and you feel light and energized. This day, the colon is cleansed via coloema and colonics treatments using the latest equipment that gently cleans you thoroughly. Therapists are courteous and well-trained to handle your every concern. Break time lets you take a stroll around the gardens, swim at the waterfalls, read a book or simply pray and meditate. The day ends with another spa treatment.

Day four

Your fast is broken with a welcome treat—breakfast! You eat the most delicious vegetarian meal ever. Then it's off to the coloema room for your last cleansing. This is followed by a lunch buffet of nutritious foods that are coconut- and vegetable-based whipped up by chef Felix Schoener.

Then a final visit to the clinic. The result? Easily 2-3 inches off your waist and you weigh 4-6 pounds less.

Repeat performance

A detox should be experienced at least once in a lifetime by the curious. For the health enthusiast, ideally it should be a semi-annual procedure. You look visibly different after a detox because your skin is more radiant, your disposition calmer and your outlook brighter than ever.

Love and light!

Contact the Farm at San Benito at 7508888 (Marketing Office, Mandarin Oriental Hotel).

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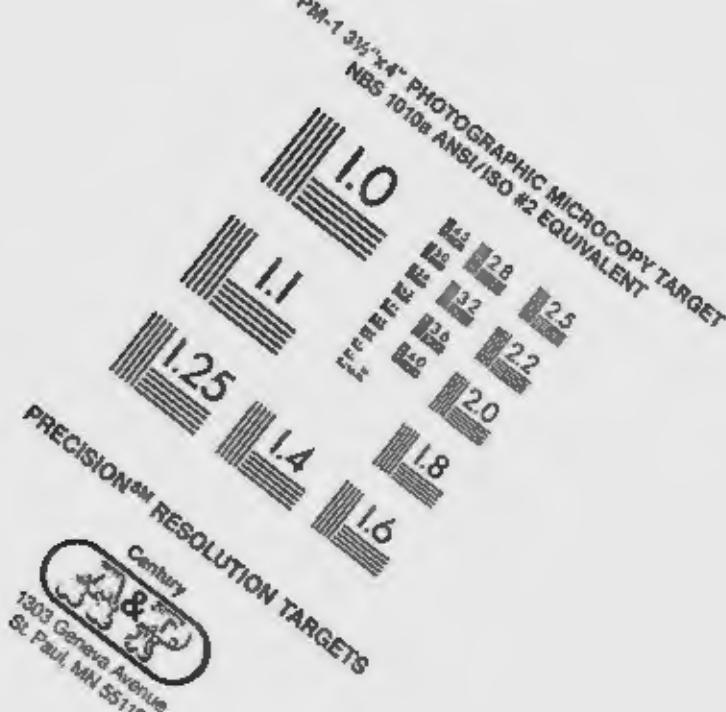
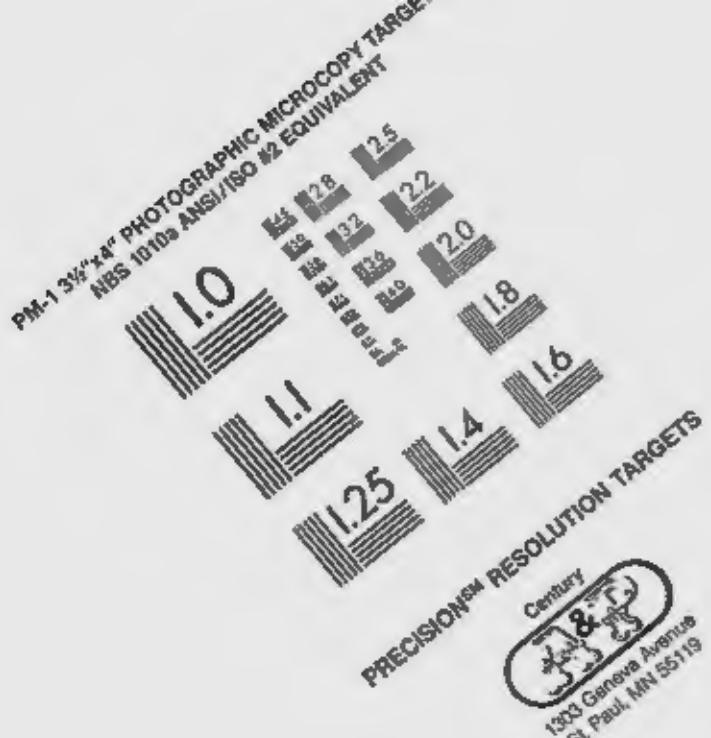
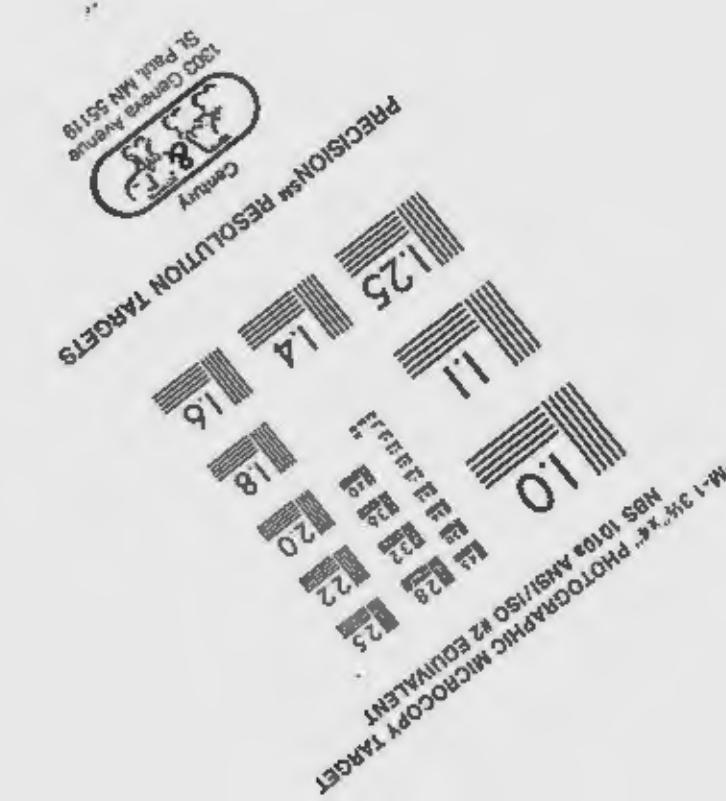
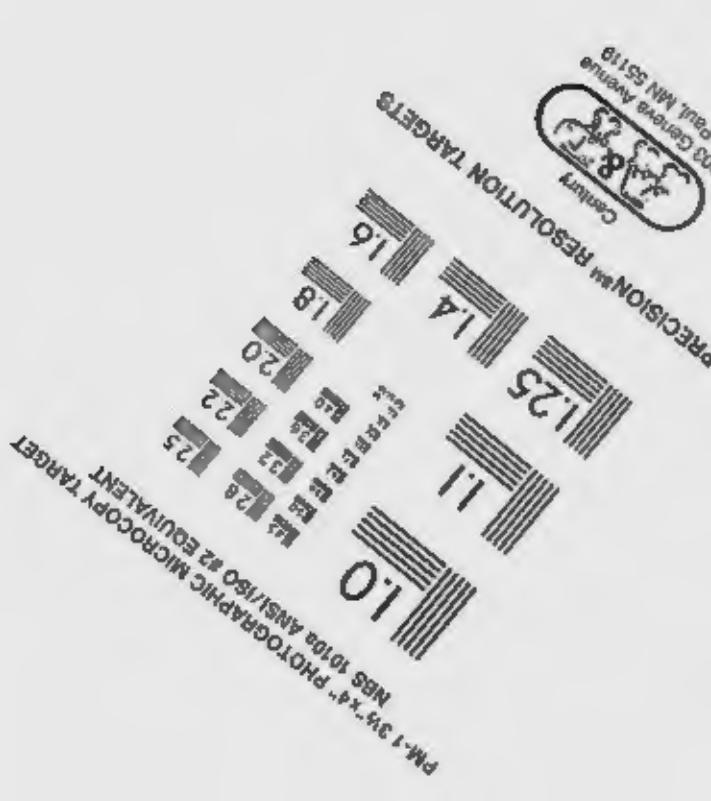
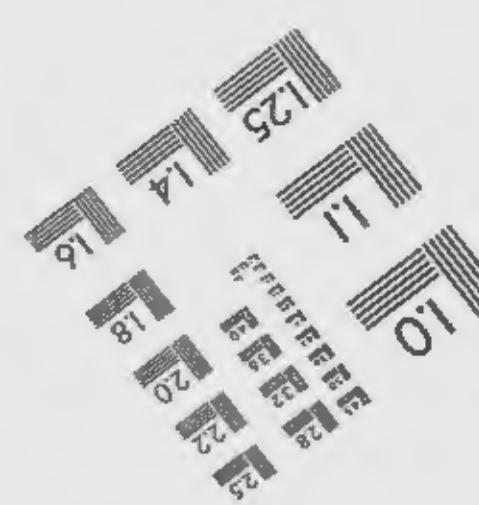
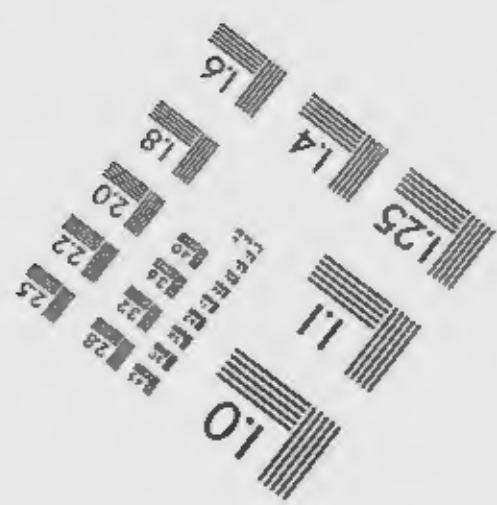
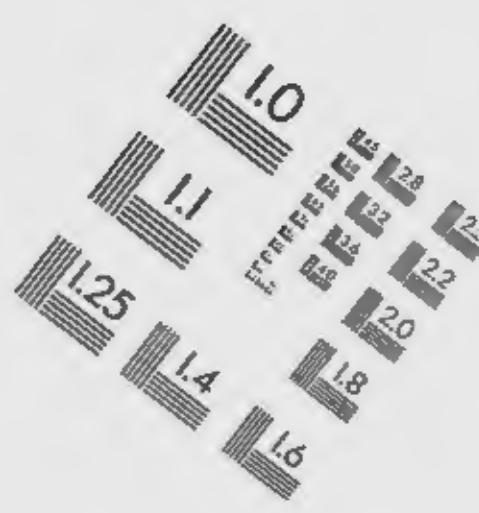
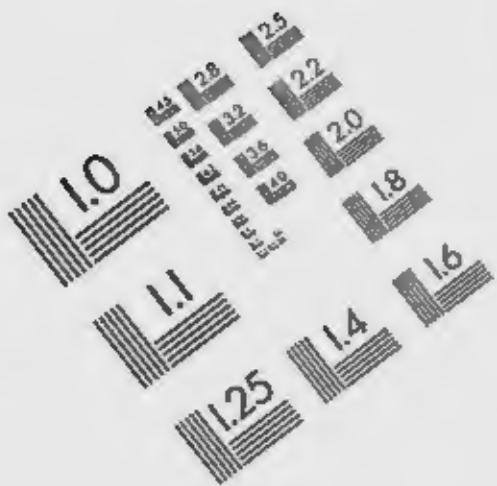


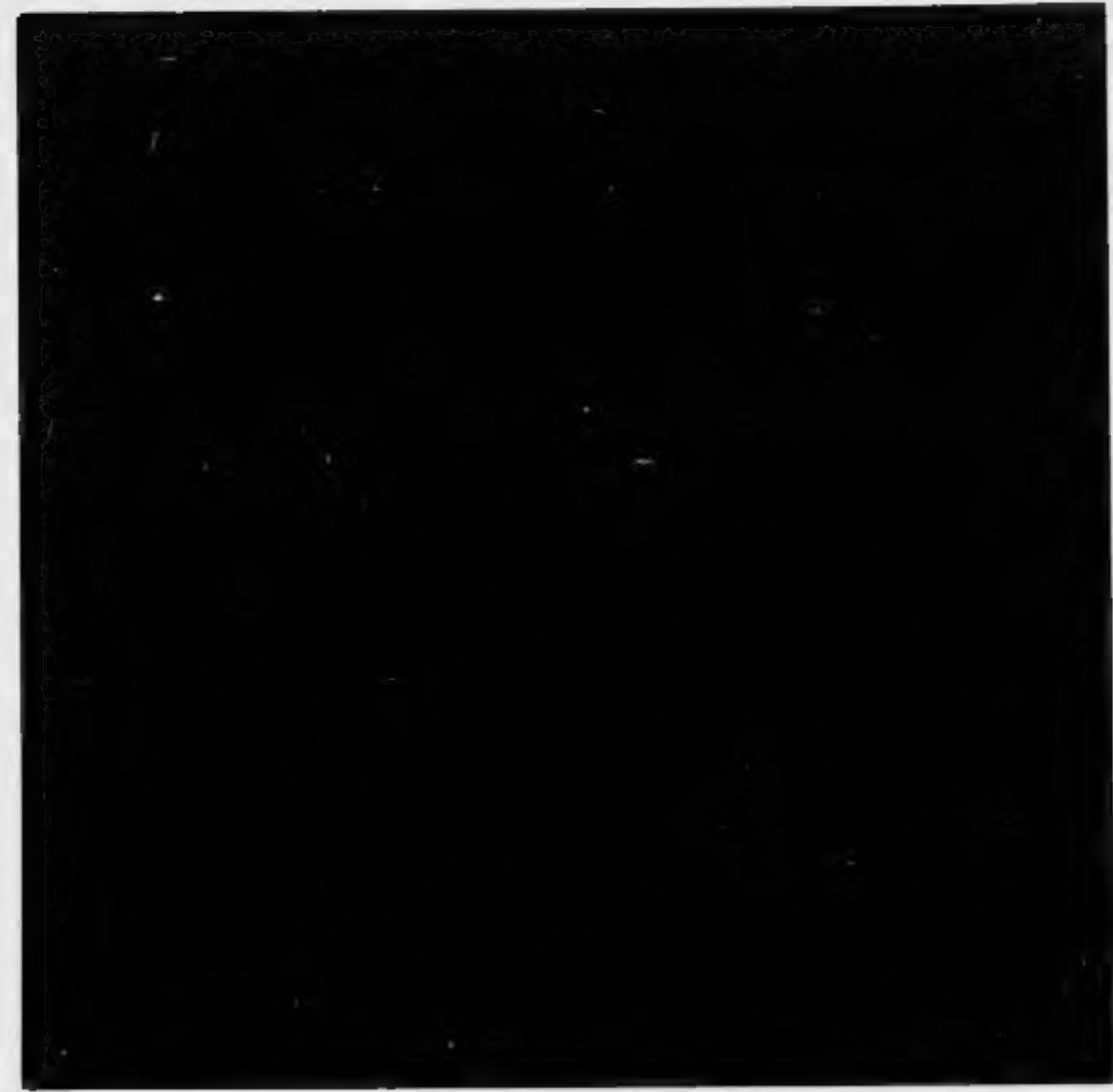
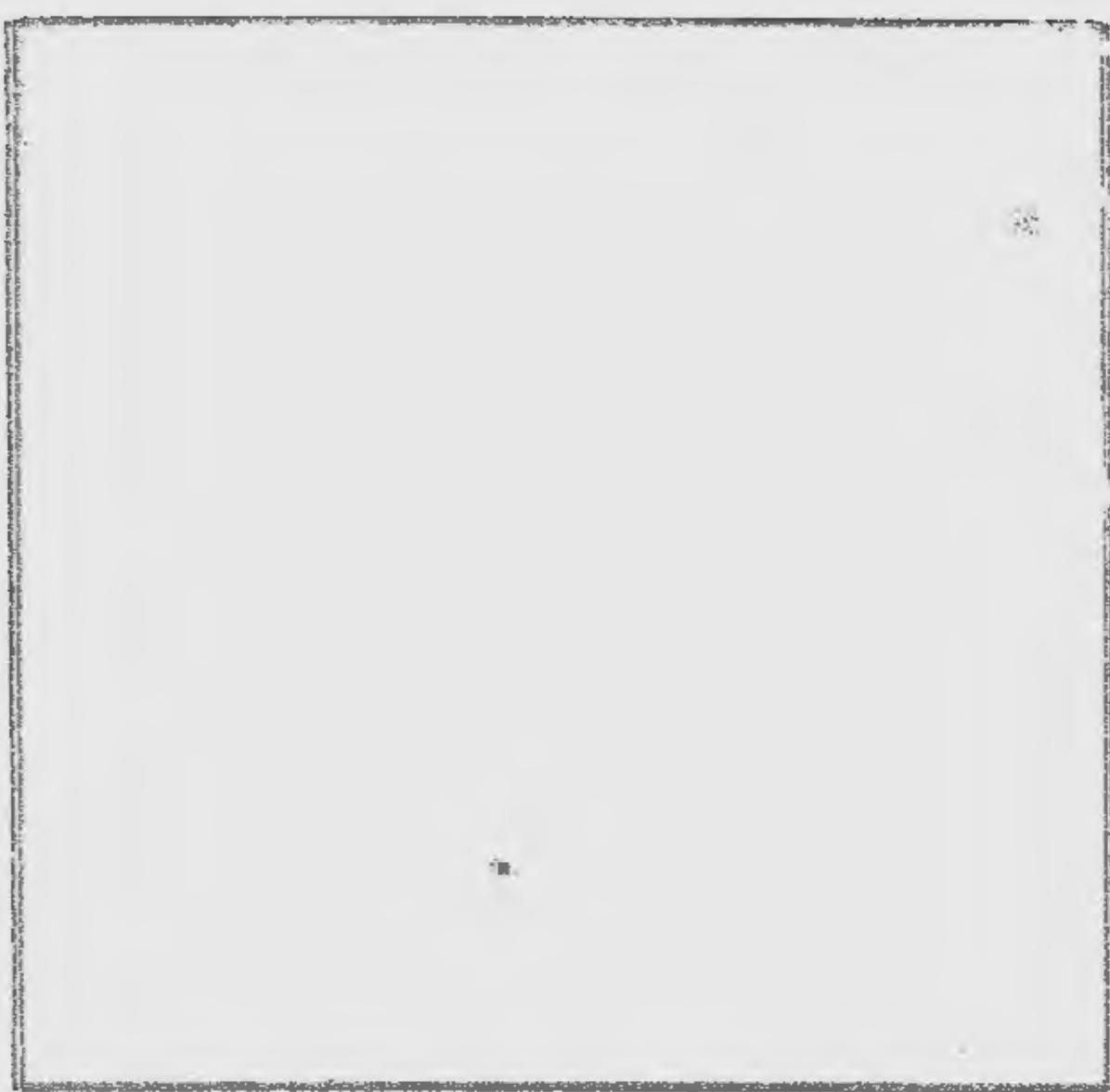
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